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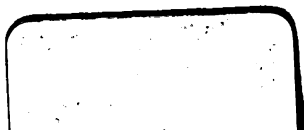
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IN THE EAST COUNTRY.



IN THE EAST COUNTRY

WITH

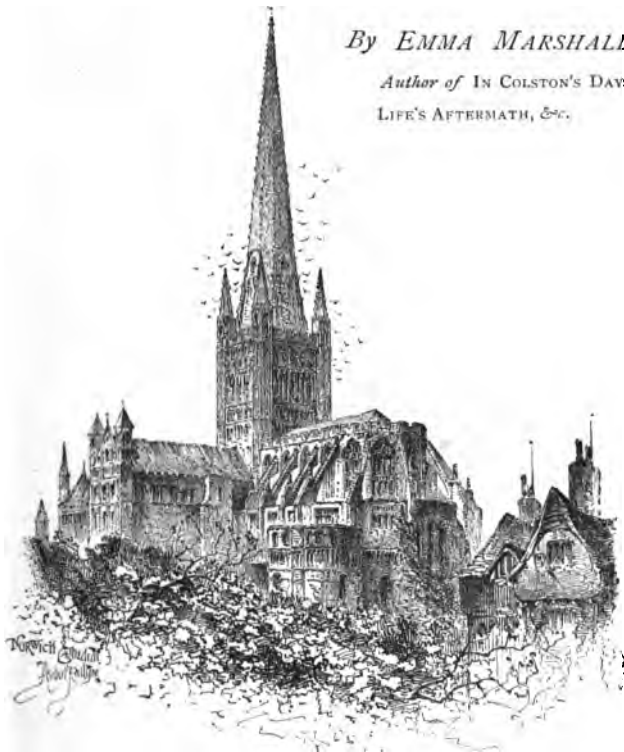
Sir Thomas Browne, Kt.

Physician and Philosopher of the City of NORWICH

By EMMA MARSHALL

Author of IN COLSTON'S DAYS

LIFE'S AFTERMATH, &c.



LONDON

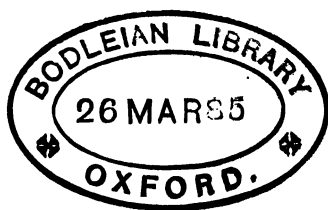
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TO
THE DEAR MEMORY
OF
MY FATHER AND MOTHER,
WHO WERE BOTH BORN IN THE
ANCIENT CITY OF
NORWICH,
I DEDICATE, WITH TENDER AFFECTION,
THIS STORY OF THE EAST COUNTRY.

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INTRODUCTION.



THE central figure in this Story of the East Country in the reign of Charles the Second, is that of the author of the "Religio Medici," who practised as a physician in the city of Norwich for many years. The domestic incidents of

Sir Thomas Browne's life are gathered from his works and letters, edited by Simon Wilkin, of Norwich, in 1836, and re-published in 1852 in Bohn's Antiquarian Library. To these volumes I am indebted for the particulars of his two sons—Edward, who settled in Salisbury Court, Fleet Street, as a physician, and attained to great eminence in his profession; and

Thomas, "Honest Tom," as his father delighted to call him. Tom was a sailor, and distinguished himself by his undaunted courage and noble conduct in the war with the Dutch in the years 1665 and 1666.

No trace of this young sailor appears in the family records after 1667. But I have filled in the outline of his splendid career, and early death, with such details as imagination suggested to me as possible, if not probable. While the salient points in the life of the learned Physician are in the main correct, I need hardly say many of the circumstances and people, which surround him are wholly fictitious.

It is remarkable that Sir Thomas Browne published his "*Religio Medici*" in 1642, a year memorable for the first scene in that long struggle between the King and the people, when fierce strife was raging in the country, and the nation was split up into parties, without regard to family ties; when brother lifted his sword against brother, and father and son were often divided—the one giving in his allegiance to the King, the other to the Parliament.

But, although a Royalist, and loyal son of the Church of England, Sir Thomas Browne was by no means diverted from his philosophical research or literary work by the tumult around him. His

museum of "natural curiosities," his garden, his flowers, and later, all the sweet interests of home, were not affected by the storm without. No one can read his letters to his sons, without being touched by the depth of his paternal love and care for their advancement, and education, in its best sense, of which they tell.

Sir Thomas Browne sent his sons at a very early age to see the world, encouraging them to cultivate habits of observation, and to let nothing pass by unnoticed. His daughters, also, appear to have travelled in France again and again, and he followed his children with his thoughts and prayers, and kept up a constant correspondence with them during their travels.

As these letters are read, and the figure of the philosopher and physician takes shape—as the wise head of his household, the tender husband and father—it seems that a somewhat cold and distant appreciation of the author's quaint works belonging to a past age, changes into a sympathetic, and even affectionate regard.

The study of his writings, more especially of that work by which he is best known, the "*Religio Medici*," is a labour of love which meets a rich reward. The colloquy with God—with which Sir Thomas Browne

•

says he took his farewell of the world every night—is to be found in its twelfth section, and is so beautiful that it deserves to be preserved. Bishop Ken's evening hymn contains many of its thoughts and aspirations, and it is interesting to compare them.

"The night is come, like to the day;
Depart not thou, Great God, away.
Let not my sins, black as the Night,
Eclipse the Lustre of thy Light.
Keep still in my Horizon; for to me
The Sun makes not the day, but thee.
Thou whose nature cannot sleep,
On my temples centry keep;
Guard me 'gainst those watchful Foes,
Whose eyes are open while mine close.
Let no Dreams my Head infest,
But such as Jacob's Temples blest.
While I do rest, my Soul advance;
Make my sleep a Holy Trance:
That I may, my rest being wrought,
Awake into some holy thought,
And with as active vigour run
My course as doth the Nimble Sun.
Sleep is a death, O make me try,
By sleeping what it is to die:
And as gently lay my Head
On my Grave, as now my Bed.
Howe'er I rest, Great God, let me
Awake again at last with thee.

And thus assur'd, behold I lie
Securely, or to wake or die.
These are my drowsie days ; in vain
I do now wake to sleep again :
O come that hour, when I shall never
Sleep again, but wake for ever."

I may quote here what has been said by one of our highest authorities on the growth and development of English literature—Professor John Nichol, of Glasgow University—in a lecture upon the authors of the seventeenth century:—"But the greatest master of the quaint style of this, or I may add, of any age, was Sir Thomas Browne, the eccentric physician of Norwich, author of the '*Religio Medici*.' He seems to have lived wholly in the past among traditions and mysteries, and mediæval theories of life and death, mingling the moderate scepticism of his science with a credulity that embraces Astrology, Alchemy, and Witchcraft, in a train of desultory thought, which often vents itself in bursts of thrilling eloquence. Turning from the history of his age to his own books, is like retreating from a battle-field to the interior of a Minster, where an organ is sounding to the chant of ancient Litanies."

And again, we may say that turning from these books, to the home where he ruled so wisely and

loved so well, to the letters he wrote to his absent children, to the glimpse we have here and there of the friendship existing between the father and his sons, we feel attracted to him by that touch of nature which makes the whole world of kin. The gulf, which the changes of laws and customs, and the rolling years may have brought, is bridged over; and we feel that none of such changes can shadow the beauty of a life like his, in any time or age, illuminated as it was by the sun of an all-pervading charity, and closing with the expression of a humble and unquestioning faith.

I have here to acknowledge the kindness of Miss Emily Holt, who gave me much valuable information, and of the Rev. R. H. Fox, M.A., of Bury St. Edmunds, who allowed me to read and make use of the many interesting details contained in a lecture on "Witchcraft and the Black Art," delivered by him in the Athenæum at Bury in 1871.

I have also been furnished with material, in extracts from Blomfield's "History of Norfolk," and in a letter, the original of which was in the possession of the late Dawson Turner, Esq., of Yarmouth, containing a naïve and amusing account of Charles the Second's visit to Norwich, to which my attention was directed by my friend, J. H. Gurney, Esq., of

Northrepps Hall, to whose kindness I am also indebted for a copy of this letter.

Henry Birkbeck, Esq., of Stoke Holy Cross, near Norwich, most kindly allowed me to have a photograph of the beautiful mantelpiece now in his library, which was taken from the mansion of Sir Thomas Browne, when it was pulled down some years ago, and is, I believe, the only relic of any importance, which is left to tell of the stately proportions of the physician's house in Norwich. That house has now passed away, and not a trace remains of the famous gardens, with their terrace walks, and rare herbs and plants, which Evelyn describes as a "paradise and cabinet of rarities, and that of the best collections, especially medails, books, plants, and natural things."

There is doubtless a feeling of sadness in the passing away of so much that has been accounted precious, and has been the source of so much pleasure to many people of cultured taste, and refinement.

But I think Sir Thomas Browne has left his "foot-prints in the sands of time," and it may be that those who can trace them may take heart, and pursue their way more bravely than before, in diligent research and patient study. Remembering always, that the Norwich physician had fast hold of that Anchor which did not fail him when the death he had so often

meditated on, drew near. Some of his last words were expressive of entire submission to the Will of God, and fearlessness of death, from the sharpness of which Christ had delivered him. In the hope of immortality he rests, who, in his own forcible style, said :

“It is the heaviest stone that melancholy can throw at a man, to tell him he is at the end of his nature, or that there is no further state to come, unto which this seems progressional, and otherwise *made in vain*.”—From *Hydriotaphia*.

WOODSIDE,

LEIGH WOODS, CLIFTON.

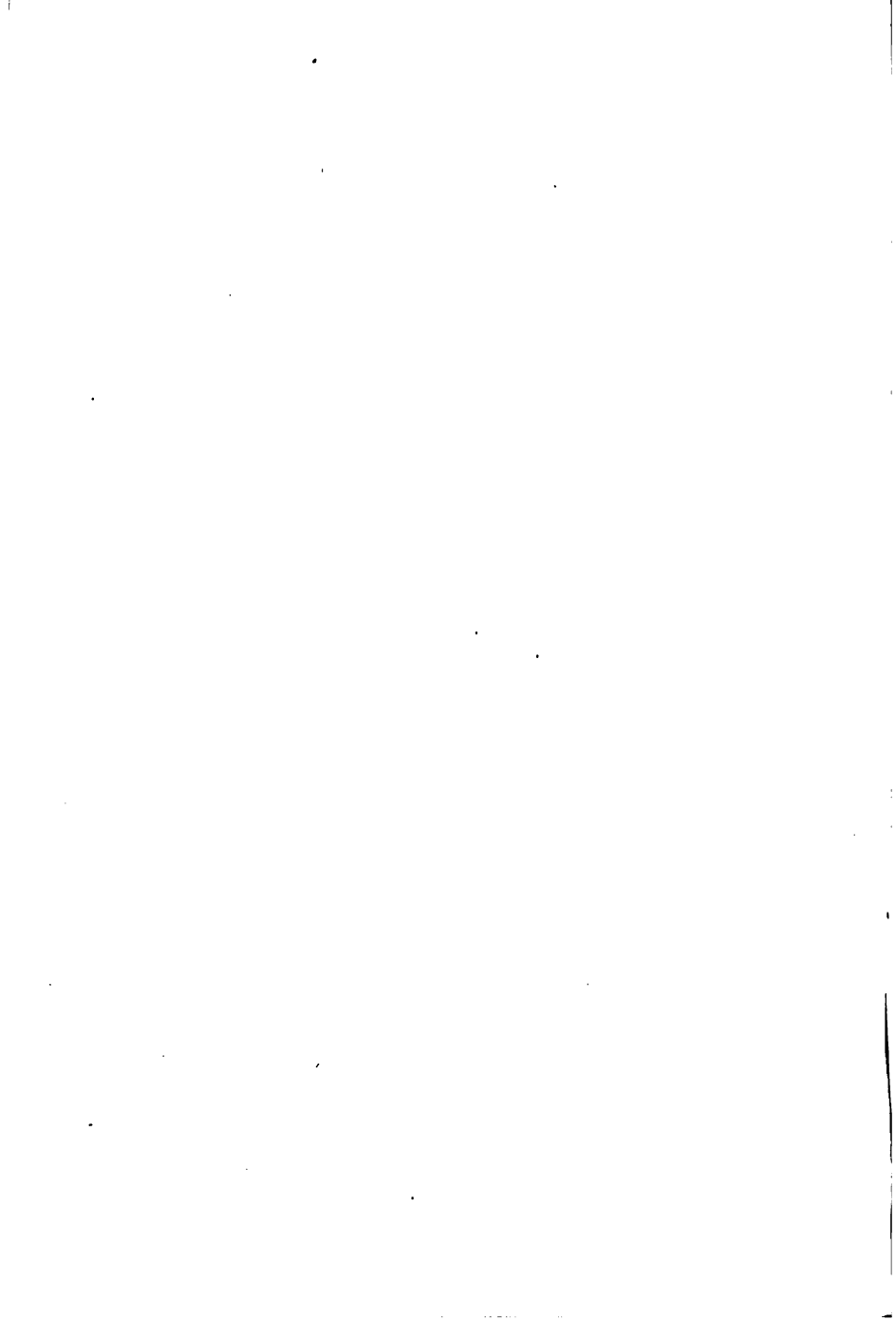
All Saints' Day, 1884.

PART I.

1665.

May we not again say, that in the huge mass of evil, as it rolls and swells, there is ever some good lurking imprisoned, working towards deliverance and triumph.—CARLYLE.

B





OUT IN THE STORM.

A FIERCE north wind was sweeping with angry blasts over the level country which surrounds the city of Norwich. There were moments of almost unbroken calm, when the wind died away with a moan, and the storm seemed lulled to rest. Then, like a giant refreshed, the gale arose again with redoubled fury, and dashed wildly against everything that came in its way. In the village of Cringleford a stately elm had fallen across the road, all its budding branches lying in the dust, never more to be the home of the rooks, who were sitting disconsolately on the tower of the old church, watching the wreck of their nests with low uneasy caws.

There were but few houses in Cringleford in the year 1665, and there are but few now. The water-mill occupies the most prominent position now as then ; and during the pause of the storm, the rush of the stream and thud of the heavy wheel were distinctly heard in monotonous cadence.

Near the church, with its quaint thatched roof and irregular architecture, stood in those far-off times a dwelling of no very great pretensions with its yew-tree fence enclosing a pleasance or garden of less than half an acre, lying before the red-brick house, which was so thickly clothed with ivy that the form of the high-pitched gables and wide latticed bays was lost.

A girl, cloaked and hooded, stood under the wooden porch, and seemed to hesitate whether to venture out of its shelter or not. After taking a few steps from the house, she retreated again, and a voice from within called—

“You cannot do it, Amphyllis—you cannot face the storm.”

The girl who answered to the name was now standing in the low hall, with its oak panels and quaint carving, and said to the speaker :

“I must go ; it is life or death, Bridget.”

“Life or death to thee, methinks. When one tree is blown down, another may follow soon enow. I say, tarry till the morrow.”

“Tarry till the morrow ! it will be too late then, too late—”

“How can you tell ? The morning may see a change. The frenzy of the fever is past, and he is as calm as a babe.”

"I know it; but is it not the calm before another frenzy, like this? Hush! hearken! there is the sound of the millwheel and the water, and only the dying voice of the wind; but it will rise anon, and then—"

"It will sweep thee away if thou wilt be so foolhardy. Even now it is rising."

Yes, the wind was rising, lifting up its mighty voice and flinging a shower of sharp cold rain against the little lattice window of the hall, as it shook every casement in the house with an angry rattle. Again there was a hush outside, but within, from the upper story, a shrill voice was heard—

"Phyllis! Amphyllis! fetch the doctor; I want him; I crave for him. Phyllis! Is she gone? Send her, send her. Oh! that I could see the Doctor before I die."

"Hark! Bridget," the girl exclaimed; "it is just as I said: he is not really better. Run to him quick, and tell him I am gone, for not another moment will I tarry."

Before Bridget could arrest her, Amphyllis had let the heavy door bang behind her, and was out in the garden making her way towards the old wooden gates, fastened in the middle by a heavy bar, which her slender fingers had some difficulty in removing. Having opened the gates they swung back

with violence, and Amphyllis had to steady herself against the post to prevent falling. Then gathering her grey camlet cloak tightly round her, she struggled bravely on towards the city, and, crossing the fallen elm with a quick alert spring, she had soon left Cringleford behind her.

The road to Norwich was in winter, often almost impassable by reason of mud and deep ruts, but the dry March weather was in Amphyllis's favour. The driving showers which were blown across the country on the breath of the storm had not yet left any perceptible trace upon the roads, where the peck of dust, which is said to be worth a king's ransom, was lying in heaps at every corner, and whirling about in little eddies as the wind passed by them. Amphyllis was swift of foot, and, with the earnestness of purpose which characterized her, she very soon reached the city gates, and descending the steep hill by the Guild Hall, found herself in the square of the Market Place, and finally stopped before a mansion at the corner of one of the narrow streets leading from the Gentlemen's Walk to the Haymarket, which was the house of the doctor she sought. Amphyllis was admitted after two rather timid knocks with the large ring hanging through a savage lion's face on one side of the massive door.

"The doctor—always the doctor," was the greeting of an old servant. "Do you think he'll come out in a gale like this to a bit of a lass like you, eh?"

"I think he will come, if you tell him, sir, it is my father who needs his assistance very sorely. He is sick, as I fear me, unto death, and he cries out for the Doctor till my heart is pierced by the words, and I cannot endure to hear them and let them pass unheeded."

By this time Amphyllis had loosened her hood, which had been firmly fastened under her chin, and the thick outer garment fell back.

Perhaps no more lovely vision had ever been seen in the hall of the great Norwich physician, and old Jonas was not insensible to the fact.

"They do talk of angels unawares," he muttered, as the rich masses of gold-coloured hair fell from the confinement of the little cap or coif Amphyllis wore under her hood, and flooded her dainty figure with light.

She wore a red gown, full and untrimmed, which opened and displayed a blue skirt of stout material. Her sleeves ended at the elbow, and displayed a perfectly shaped and rounded arm, with a plain cuff turned back, to match the pointed collar, out of which her slender throat rose like the stalk of a lily. Her hair was parted in the middle, on either side of

her low white brow, under which a pair of dark blue eyes looked up at old Jonas with a wistful beseeching earnestness he could not resist.

"Prythee tell the Doctor that I am Amphyllis Windham, and that I crave to see him, for he alone can help me. I have walked from Cringleford alone, as I could find no trusty messenger, and Bridget dare not leave my father."

"Those who have the care of you, should have known better than to send you forth in a hurricane, and, perchance, in worse dangers than from flying tiles and broken boughs. But step in and rest you, while I find out whether the master can see you. He is even now in close converse with some gentlefolks from Bury, who come on grave matters. But, as I said, tarry a few minutes. There is St. Peter's striking six, and the light is fading. It is not meet for a young creature like you to be abroad alone."

Jonas was about to cross the hall to one of the large doors which opened from it, when from the carved gallery which ran along the corridor at the head of the stairs, a voice was heard—

"Jonas, who is it?"

And Amphyllis, looking up, saw a girl's head bending down from the oak balustrade, as the question, "Who is it?" was repeated.

"It's a maiden from Cringleford, in trouble about her father, Mistress Mary."

"In trouble!" exclaimed the girl. "I will come down," and in another moment Mary Browne stood by the side of Amphyllis. "Come into the parlour," she said, "and tell me your trouble. Do you want my father?"

"Indeed, yes. I know he is good and charitable; and my father lies very sick, and though the barber-surgeon let blood last night, he is yet fevered and——"

While Amphyllis was speaking, the Doctor's daughter had taken her hand and was gazing into her face.

"How fair you are!" came almost involuntarily from her lips. "Now there is the chair where my mother sits when Bess and I tempt her to listen to our singing. But she is gone to dine and sup at Master Houghton's with Bess. I like best to rest at home in the chance of sitting awhile with my father. Some gentlemen are with him, and I have not had his company. But I forget—you are troubled as to your father, and I am running on about mine. What ails your father?"

"I scarce can tell. He has always been strange since my mother and little Ned and Dolly died.

He thinks they were bewitched, and that the old woman who lived at the back of our house at Bury cast an evil eye on them. \ But I think it is only that my father is brain-sick. How can witches bring on fits in which the children died?"

"How!" exclaimed Mary Browne. "Ah! that we do not know, but this we know, they *do it*. There is not in all the country a cleverer and more learned man than my father, and yet he says the Bible and his own conscience tell him, that the devil so throws his wiles round certain folk, that they can in their turn work evil upon poor innocent children. Ah! yes, I believe in witchcraft or the black art."

As Amphyllis looked into the pale, almost ethereal face of her companion while she spoke, she saw that her eyes were luminous with the earnestness of her feelings. Mary Browne was not fair to look upon, like Amphyllis Windham, but she had that indescribable charm which belongs to the enthusiast, and which we cannot, if we would, set aside. . She was at this time scarcely fifteen; but she was very tall and slender, and had all the grace of movement and gesture which belongs to girls of her type. She was older in her manners and appearance than Amphyllis Windham, who was in reality two years her senior. The physician's daughter was

dressed in more costly clothes than Amphyllis : her upper gown was of sarcenet, and she wore an apron trimmed with wide rich lace ; and her collar and elbow-sleeves were ornamented with the same material. Her hair was drawn back from a high forehead, and confined in stiff bows, surmounted by a wide ribbon, the ends flowing to her waist. Perhaps this quaint style of head-gear and the expanse of her wide forehead, added years to her appearance ; and, contrasted with Amphyllis' glowing, radiant beauty, many at first sight would have called Mary plain.

"How is it that I have never seen you before ?" Mary asked, as she sat with her head resting on the carved back of an upright chair.

"It is not likely that you should see me. My father was living at Bury till last year ; my name is Amphyllis Windham. We are of the Windham family, but poor, very poor, and unnoticed by them."

"Amphyllis Windham !" Mary repeated ; "it is a beautiful name, and it suits you well. How was it you came to Cringleford ?"

"The house was left vacant by the death of an old uncle of my mother's ; at least there were none to inhabit it but Cousin Bridget and Andrew at times. She bid us to come and live with her after the troubles—I mean after mother, and Ned, and Dolly

died. She thought it might cure my father to leave the scene of the deaths of the children and my mother ; but no—" Then breaking off, she said :

"Is there no hope of your father—the Doctor—coming to our help ? If not, I must hasten back and try to fetch another physician. But, oh ! I would fain that Dr. Thomas Browne came, if it were possible."

"It shall be possible," Mary exclaimed. "I will go myself to his room and brave the gentlemen who are in earnest converse there. There is no Bess to stop me, and tell me I am over bold for my years, which she is never slow to do. Tarry here with what patience you may and I will do my best. I think," she added in a lower voice, "if my father knows that your father is tormented with the thought of witchcraft he will be the more ready to give his aid. Though when is he not ready ?" she said as she left the room.

In the hall she paused to speak to Jonas, who acted as porter and general receiver of all the messages and summonses which were continually coming for the Doctor.

"Who is with my father, Jonas, in the library ?"

"That is more than I know. They have come from Bury St. Edmunds, as I learned from the postboys, in their own chariot and four horses."

"They must be people of quality, then! Well, the easier to face them; but, Jonas, prythee, ask Mistress Prynne for some spiced wine and cake for that poor maiden yonder. Jonas, is she not beauteous to behold?"

"Ay, ay, but beauty is only skin deep. I don't hold with young girls a-gadding off at night, all unprotected like, and in a gale which might blow their heads off. That's not my notion of young women's carriage of themselves, but I'll see she has the spiced cup, poor thing! poor thing!"

"That's a good Jonas!" Mary said. "And now to bring my courage up to the sticking-point, as father saith."

The tap at the library door was answered by "Who is there?" in the Doctor's voice.

"It is Mary, father. May I enter?"

Then Mary heard the sound of feet and voices, and the door opened to allow two men to pass out, one saying:

"And so I wish you good-even, Dr. Browne; we have thought it our bounden duty to advertise you of what may come to-morrow, that you may have time to think over matters."

"I thank you, good sirs, for your consideration. If the learned judge, so famous as he is, be

pleased to summon me, a humble inquirer after truth, well, I am his servant and yours. You had best abide here to-night, the storm has not abated."

But the two men shook their heads, and Dr. Thomas Browne, accompanying them to the door, bowed them out with courtly grace; and returning, said :

"Well, Moll, what dost thou want of me? Has one of the little ones scratched a finger, or bruised his knee, or what?"

"Nay, father, all is well here; but there is waiting in the parlour a young girl, who craves you will go to her father. He is very sick, and his daughter has walked alone from Cringleford to fetch you. Think of that—alone, and unattended, and in this raging storm!"

The Doctor stroked his daughter's smooth hair, and kissed her forehead. "All agog, Moll, as thy mother saith; as if there were but one sick man in all the city, that I must e'en be off post-haste. But, well-a-day, I will be ready anon. I must first despatch a messenger to my good friend Dr. Dee, touching this matter at Bury, whither I may expect to be summoned to-morrow or next day."

"At Bury, father? that is whence the Windhams have come. It was there the children who died were bewitched in fearsome fits, and their mother with them."

"Nay, but the plot grows thicker," said the Doctor. "Leave me for a quiet space, dear Moll, and see that the poor maiden is refreshed; then I will carry her with me on the pillion saddle in which thy mother and Bess ride, and I will go to Cringleford. Ah, I hear the boys' voices; go, they will help to divert the girl; for Tom is laughing at some mad freak the wind has played—no madder than some of his own, I warrant."

Mary took her father's meaning to be that he wished to be alone, and gently closing the door of the library, left him to himself.

It was a stately room, with high vaulted ceiling, and carved mantel-shelf. On the open hearth a few logs were piled; but the roaring of the wind down the wide chimney had kept the fire low and smouldering. An oil lamp on the table, and another on the shelf of one of the oak bookcases, scarcely sufficed to light the room. But the light of the lamp on the table shone upon the face of the physician as he threw himself into his chair, pushed aside his ink-horn, and thick papers, and quills, and exclaimed:

"And this is a matter of death or life to the two poor creatures arraigned before Sir Matthew Hale to-morrow. Well, I pray God I may not err in this case. I would fain hope that the jury may find

their verdict without my poor testimony ; but if not, I must e'en go and speak what I believe the whole truth, God helping me.

"Shall the innocent suffer for the guilty ? Shall cruel practices upon poor babes go unpunished ? practices which come from the father of all lies and evil, and all wickedness, even the devil himself ? It is well, forsooth, for these two gentlemen of Bury to ride hither to move me by their representations. Their suggestion of fraud in the bewitched ones, and of malice in the accusers of the two old women—that never will move me a whit, for of what use is a testimony if it be swayed from side to side by the talk of outside folk, who jump at conclusions ? Nay, I would fain be spared, but if that cannot be, I must obey the summons and speak as an honest man before God. It is passing strange that I should be called to this man of whom Moll speaks, a sufferer it seems also from the black art, and in the same place."

Dr. Thomas Browne's face, as these thoughts passed through his mind, and even found utterance in low, deliberate words, was a study ; for the man who had this determination to speak and act up to his convictions of right, had one of the tenderest and most benevolent natures. This, his acknowledged character,

was written in his countenance, which was, unlike his daughter Mary's, rather thoughtful and meditative than humorous or brilliant. Unlike her, too, in that his features were refined and regular: his mouth, shaded by a short moustache, was sweet and benevolent in its curves. He wore his hair in long curls, parted on the forehead, which was wide and open, the outline softened by a few stray locks. The eyebrows were delicately pencilled and raised above the full eyelids, which gave to the face the expression of inquiry, and searching after truth on all subjects, rather to attract attention to them, and invite investigation, than to dogmatise as to individual conviction. The eyes were singularly beautiful, of that deep colour which varies in different lights, and may appear hazel, liquid brown, or dark grey. A small pointed beard, which he stroked habitually when he was deep in thought, gave a firmness to the contour of the face, as did the setting of a wide linen collar, closely fastened above a vest, over which he generally wore a thick cloak or cape of cloth or velvet, after the fashion of the time. One of the earliest editions of the "*Religio Medici*" lay on the table, and he drew it towards him and turned to a page there which was marked.

"I have ever believed, and do now, that there are

witches; they that doubt of these do not only deny them but spirits.' Aye, I wrote these words more than twenty years ago. Is the Scripture weakened since then? rather is my faith therein weakened? Nay, verily, but strengthened. And now to my letter for Dr. Dee, and then to the help of the poor creature at Cringleford, and may God of His mercy show me how to aid him in his sore strait."

When Mary returned to the parlour she found her guest seated where she had left her, with a silver tray on a small table by her side, and her brother, often called by his father, "Honest Tom," talking in his merry ringing voice to her.

"Why, Moll," he exclaimed, "you show scant courtesy to your friends to leave them to their own devices thus. I come in, and find an angel by the hearth, and when I question her she weeps! Nay, then, Mistress Angelica, forgive me if I be too frank. Sailors are but bluff fellows, but they may have tender hearts for all that."

"Indeed, sir, I am in haste to be gone, for time presses. I pray you, do not detain me."

"For shame, Tom!" exclaimed his sister. "Mistress Windham has braved the storm to seek our father's aid for her sick father. You have been over bold, I see. Mistress Amphyllis, do not heed him, he

is always jesting and expecting others to jest with him. He does not know what it is to have a sad heart."

The doctor's son and namesake made a gesture of dissent, and putting his hand to his side, exclaimed—

"Alas! for my sister's ignorance, when I am now pierced with a wound which it will take but one salve to heal. Smile on me, fairest vision, or I die."

"Nay, now, Tom, you carry this jest too far. You distress this young gentlewoman; it is not right—it is not courteous."

Amphyllis had risen from the chair, and with great dignity turning to Mary said—

"I crave your permission to leave this house. I will seek another doctor, since methinks I shall fail to get the services of Dr. Thomas Browne."

And now the door was opened by Jonas, who said, "There is a young man inquiring for one Amphyllis Windham."

"Bid him come in," said Tom, advancing to the door, and meeting on the threshold a tall young man, dressed as a Puritan minister, who, without noticing Mary Browne or her brother, walked straight up to Amphyllis and said in a tone of rebuke—

"You have done very ill to venture forth in this storm and so late; return with me at once. I marvel

much that you should have come to this house for the physician's help."

"He has raved all day; he has prayed to see Dr. Thomas Browne. What was left me but to humour him? But I will come now, Andrew, and we will call another doctor. There is one in St. Giles' Street."

"My father will come," Mary said eagerly. "Go, Tom, and hasten him; he would have hastened to the sick gentleman sooner had not messengers from Bury hindered him; go, Tom!"

"I do not know wherefore you should speak thus peremptorily to this fair lady," Tom said, turning to the grave sedate young man, who returned his rather contemptuous glance with one of mild reproof.

"What cause have you to rate her, I ask?"

"Every cause," was the calm answer. "I am near of kin to Amphyllis Windham, and it is only with my permission that she and her father have taken up their abode in my house with my sister Bridget."

Amphyllis pouted and said sharply, "It was the will of your father that mine should share the house and all in it with Bridget. That is well understood, Andrew."

"We will not wrangle or dispute here, Amphyllis. It is the Lord's will that I receive due submission

from you, and as your lawful protector I call on you to return with me with no further delay."

"You are my cousin, I know; but I deny that you are my lawful protector," the girl said, stamping her little foot with vehemence. "I deny it; but oh!" clasping her hands, "how can I stand parleying here while my father is crying for help?" Then turning to Tom she said, "Make one more appeal to the physician, I pray you!"

"Will I not, fair lady?" said Tom, leaving the room. "I will serve you in this, or in aught else to the utmost of my power."

Such a noble, handsome fellow as Tom Browne might well leave an impression on any one who saw him, and Amphyllis began to reproach herself for resenting his free, joyous manner. It was intolerable to her to be taken to task by Andrew Whitelock, with his stiff manner and deliberate, slow utterance. Even in the midst of her trouble it floated through Amphyllis's mind how different life must be for Dr. Thomas Browne's children and for her: so seldom did she leave the garden, shut in by its old gates and high walls; so weary was she often of her cousin Bridget's prosaic humdrum life—of her father's wild fancies, and the perpetual reference to the ideal, which he never reached. In one confused jumble

he would talk of alchemy and the philosopher's stone, of witchcraft and the black art, and of all the marvels he had collected, with pains and trouble worthy of a higher aim. He had wasted not only time and strength, but substance also, on the pursuit of talismans and charms, and of the wonderful chemical discoveries which should turn base metal into gold. There is no doubt at all that Amphyllis's father was, as she said, brain-sick. Fervid enthusiasm and fanaticism are very near of kin to madness, and for the last few years Mr. Windham had been pursued with one idea, that he was subject to the gaze of an evil eye, and that his wife's and children's death were due to the machinations of an old woman at Bury St. Edmunds.

It was soon after their loss, a year or two before this time, that Bridget Whitelock, moved with pity for Amphyllis's forlorn condition, offered her and her father a home at Cringleford. She had one brother, who had so deeply offended his father, a staunch old churchman of the Laudian School, that he had disowned and disinherited him. Implacable and unforgiving to the last, Richard Whitelock refused to see his son, or to hear any of his prayers for his conversion. He left behind strong injunctions that Andrew was never to be master in the house, and it was he, who proposed that Bridget should invite the

Windhams to take up their abode with her, and to keep that Puritanical brother of hers out.

But this was more easily said than done. The Windhams came in, it is true, Bridget herself taking the coach to Bury to remove them to Norwich ; but Andrew was not to be kept out. He went about on preaching missions, gathering together the "chosen of the Lord" in various conventicles in the district, but he made the house at Cringleford, which was called, probably from its position, "Ford End," his headquarters.

His sister Bridget was very much his senior, having at this time seen her fortieth birthday, and her fair handsome brother of eight-and-twenty, with his grave, saint-like face, was very dear to her. She held firmly to the traditions of her house, and had a full measure of satisfaction in the restored services of the church in which she had been baptized. But Andrew, if a Puritan, and setting at nought all authority of church or king, was still her brother, and, as she often expressed it, "a Saint of God's own choosing." Had she not been moved in spite of herself by his ministrations in the old days when, under the Commonwealth, the churches were supplied by ministers of his persuasion, while the regularly ordained clergymen were dispossessed of

their livings and sent forth to earn their bread how and where they could. Andrew Whitelock had been appointed to conduct the ministrations in the Church of St. Stephen's, not far from "The Gates," and here, young and of burning zeal, he had attracted many devoted followers. Bridget, in fear and trembling, would resort to St. Stephen's by stealth, and return to her father afraid of being questioned as to where she had worshipped, and terribly distressed when the direct question demanded a direct answer, for a lie was impossible to Bridget Whitelock.

All this was a matter of history now that the restoration of his most gracious majesty Charles the Second, had brought with it, the restoration of church grants and privileges.

The pendulum, as we know, moved back violently, and the Church by law established, held her own again, like the king. Even now, in the year 1665, there were misgivings in many true hearts. The king, a dethroned exile, had lived in the imagination of the people, guarded by the halo of sympathy and loyalty. The judicial murder of his father, and the stern rule of Cromwell, had made the outburst of joy in the May time of 1660 rapturous and universal. Never, perhaps, was the cry of "the King, God bless him," so earnest and so hearty. But the illusion soon

vanished. Law-abiding folk shuddered at the extravagant folly and wasteful doings of the court. Many were loyal still, but their loyalty was often pain and grief to them, and fathers and mothers trembled for their sons and daughters when they heard the stories of license and immorality, which came down from high places, lest they should wither the fair flowers of purity of life and manners by their baleful breath. And many young men like Andrew Whitelock could groan in spirit when a fair creature like Amphyllis Windham rose before them, with those dangerous gifts of beauty and fascination, which were in those days so often fatal to the peace and happiness of her who possessed them.

Now, as the young minister laid his hand gently on Amphyllis, saying, "I will take you home to Ford End—come at once," there was at least as much sadness as sternness in his face.

But Amphyllis shook off his hand and sprang towards the door, as Dr. Thomas Browne appeared with his son. Like all the rest, he started at the sight of the maiden, whom his Molly had well called *beauteous*.

"I am ready," he said, "but I fear me we must return on foot to Cringleford. My men say no horse and pillion could stand against the storm. It rages

even more fiercely, and is icy cold. Nay, nay, fair child, do not weep, I will set forth at once ; but tarry here till the morning. My children will be well pleased, and your brother and I——”

“He is not my brother, so please you, good sir,” said Amphyllis ; “he is only my kinsman, and cannot hinder me. I must return with you. I came on foot here alone ; sure, then, I can return on foot in your company.”

“Nay, then, you shall have plenty of guard,” exclaimed Tom, “though I will say I like a squall better on water than on land. There is no telling but that one’s pate may be cracked by a tile, or that one may be turned on one’s beam end ; but look alive ! we will form a bodyguard, I’ll warrant !”

Amphyllis meanwhile had again donned her thick cloak. Moll had tied the hood tightly down under the rounded chin, and, kissing all that was left attainable of the sweet face, said :

“You will come again. My mother and Bess will give you welcome.”

And then Dr. Thomas Browne tucked one of Amphyllis’s little hands under his arm, and Tom would have done the same on the other side had not Amphyllis drawn back ; while Andrew said,

“It is needless, sir, that you should accompany us,

for sure," glancing at the Doctor's servant—or, as we should say in these days, assistant—who carried a large wallet slung over his shoulder, "*three* for escort suffices."

"But if I say '*four*' was the answer, who is to gainsay me? So here goes!"



IN THE CRINGLEFORD COTTAGE.

BUT very soon all jealousies and rivalries as to who should support the fair Amphyllis were over. The four men could hardly face the fierce blast, which, sweeping down the wide market square, caught the pedestrians, like feathers, as they turned the corner; and, if it had not been for 'honest Tom's' strong arm, Amphyllis would have been forcibly blown apart from Dr. Browne, and thrown violently to the ground.

The noise of the wind was like the roaring of cannon, and some of the inhabitants were out in the market-place, terrified lest their houses should be blown about their ears.

Tom's strong arm sufficed, however, for Amphyllis's protection; he threw it round her, and made his way gallantly across the square towards the Guildhall, and then up the steep ascent, now called Gaol Hill.

There was not much opportunity for conversa-

tion, for the wind took away Amphyllis's breath, and even her stout protector could scarcely keep up his high-pitched sonorous voice; but he leaned towards the bent head, which was so close to his shoulder, and now and then some words of cheer reached Amphyllis's ear.

"We are making way, do not fear." Then, 'I'd face a gale like this every day of my life, an' I could be sure to have such a fair craft in tow."

And Amphyllis began to think that to battle alone against the storm was one thing, but to be nestling close to a brave and stout-hearted protector was another; and I do not know that she was glad when Cringleford was reached, and she directed Tom to the old gates, which were creaking and swinging on their hinges with a force which threatened to bring them down, posts and all.

The solitary light was burning in the window of the upper chamber, where the sick man lay, and Bridget was watching anxiously for the return of Amphyllis, and lamenting that she had allowed her to go out in the raging storm. She peered out into the gathering darkness with eyes which ached with the strain; and when she saw two figures coming up the drive, she hastened down, expecting to meet her brother and Amphyllis.

There was a lull in the storm as the door opened, and Amphyllis sank breathless on a chair. The flicker of the oil-lamp, which made darkness visible in the hall, just showing the outline of the tall manly figure by her side.

A second glance was sufficient to convince Bridget Whitelock that it was not her brother, but a stranger.

"Good sir," said she, "how is it that you bring back my cousin Amphyllis? Have you picked her up in a great storm? is she hurt? Say, Amphyllis, are you hurt? Speak!"

To Bridget's surprise, Amphyllis, when she did speak, laughed a little, as Tom Browne helped her to unfasten the hood which had been so firmly tied by Mary Browne's hand that it defied the efforts of Amphyllis herself to get free.

"My brother Andrew arrived soon after you quitted the house, Amphyllis. He was angered against me for permitting you to venture forth to Norwich alone and unattended. Have you seen aught of him? He went forth to the Doctor's. If he ever reached the house at all, he must be there."

Then Tom spoke in his free, frank, manner.

"It is all as you would wish, fair lady. This young gentlewoman came in the storm to my father's house, Dr. Thomas Browne. He is on his way hither with

a tall grim fellow, in the garb of one of those hypocritical——”

“Master Andrew Whitelock is my brother,” said Bridget, with dignity; “and I would recall to your mind, sir, that you stand in his house, and such words do not suit well with notions of courtesy.”

“I stand rebuked, madam,” said Tom Browne, with a low bow. “I am a sailor, and as such given to plain speaking, as all aboard the good ship ‘Foresight,’ may testify.”

“Master Browne has been very good to me, Bridget,” said Amphyllis. “How fares it with my father?”

“He is muttering and murmuring in his sleep; but there has been no outbreak of frenzy since you departed.”

And here sounds of coming feet were heard outside, and in another moment Dr. Browne, his servant, and Andrew Whitelock, were in the hall.

“Ah! the young folks are before us. What say you, Tom, did’st ever brave a storm like this aboard the ‘Foresight?’”

“Pretty tight squalls in the Bay of Biscay,” was the reply; “but I am not a little proud of getting all safe into port, with my fair craft to boot, unhurt by wind or storm.”

"Ah! well spoken, Tom; and now I would fain hear, madam," Dr. Browne said, addressing Bridget, "some history of the sick man's symptoms. It is a frenzy, you say? When was he seized?"

"An' it please you, sir, to step into the parlour," Bridget Whitelock said, "I will tell you what I know, though Amphyllis here has greater knowledge, inasmuch as she and her father have only abode here for a year or more, and she has noticed his strange ways at Bury St. Edmunds."

"Bury, always Bury St. Edmunds. See, Giles, put down the parcel on the table, and withdraw to the servants' quarters. That gentleman will perchance allow you to rest there; for in good sooth I had some labour to carry myself, and you had to carry the baggage as well."

Andrew Whitelock, who had stood quietly by, waved to the Doctor's assistant or servant to follow him to the kitchen, where a few smouldering embers were still alight.

He paused a moment at the door to say, addressing Tom, "Private matters, touching the condition of this sick man, can have no special interest for you, sir, "will you follow me?"

The Doctor laughed as the young man hesitated. There was something irresistibly attractive for him

in the beautiful Amphyllis, and he would, as his father guessed, have fain lingered.

"Nay, honest Tom," said the Doctor, "I will banish you now, and recall you later. Make yourself scarce."

Tom was rewarded by a sweet smile from Amphyllis, as she said, "Return anon, sir, and we will prepare some refreshment."

"Ah! sweetened by your presence, it will be truly an ambrosial feast, washed down by nectar," said the ready-witted Tom, much to his father's satisfaction.

But now the light and jesting manner was exchanged for one of calm deliberation, and an attitude of profound attention, as throwing aside his thick cloak, Dr. Thomas Browne seated himself, and asked Amphyllis and Bridget to give him some account of the previous history of the patient upstairs.

"An' it please you, sir," Bridget Whitelock began, "I think too free a use of drams has something to do with my kinsman's lamentable condition. The deaths of his wife and two sweet babes sent him almost beside himself. He was ever of a hot-blooded temperament, and the only being who could calm him in his fiercest moods was the mother of Amphyllis, my cousin, whom she so greatly resembles."

And here Amphyllis broke in, coming near the physician and laying her small white hand on his shoulder.

"May I speak, cousin Bridget?" she said. "It may be that my dear father has at times heated his blood with drink ; but, oh ! sir, he has had a life of sorrows and disappointed hopes, and these are hard to bear. When we abode at Bury, in our house by the Castle Hill, he pursued his learned studies, in many of which you, sir, delight. But all things failed with him. He expended money on divers glasses, and charms, and learned books, and thought he was near a grand discovery, which would make him famous. Then, when I was but a baby, he being known as a dutiful subject of the blessed King Charles, the father of our present sovereign king, his chamber, where all his treasures were collected, was rifled and everything destroyed by some rude soldiers, my mother fleeing for her life, with me in her arms. After that, we lived in a poorer way, and once an old woman who came to clean our house for us, broke a crystal stone of great value, and my father flew into a violent rage and hit the old woman across the face."

"And a shameful thing it was to do," exclaimed the Doctor ; "for there is no circumstance which

can excuse a man for raising his hand against a woman."

"I know it," said Amphyllis with a sigh; "but the woman threw back my father's curse with tenfold bitterness; and said she would see that his 'gourd was withered, and the light of his eyes put out ere another year rolled round.' My father thought it was but an idle threat, that he should be blinded. But when the vine withered that grew over our house-wall, he saw in it a sign of the curse being fulfilled; but, alas! dear sir, the witch meant far worse things. My mother died ere the year was out, with her infant, in great torture. And Ned and Doll brought up pins, and were in terrible fits, such fits that make me shudder to think of. And it was said that I escaped only because the witch herself, being ducked in a horsepond, sank to rise no more. And so her curse died with her. This is the story. Say now, good sir, whether you do not feel pity for my poor father."

"Pity! ay, verily, my child. And now let us go to his room. It would seem," he said, as he looked with scarcely less admiring eyes on Amphyllis than "honest Tom" had done,— "it would seem that a blessing has rested on you, Mistress Amphyllis, and not a curse."

"Yes, that is true!" exclaimed Bridget. "She is like the sun in this house, and I scarcely dare to think of what my life would be without her."

"Kind and good Bridget!" said Amphyllis, "you took us in and made us welcome, and a sore time you have had in your house."

"It is scarce *my* house, Amphyllis. It angers Andrew when he hears you speak of it as mine."

"As if I cared!" said the little beauty, tossing her head; as, with the lamp in her hand, she preceded the Doctor up the wide oak stairs, which were uneven and decayed, but showed some fair bits of carving when there was light to see it. And now, as the Doctor seated himself by the bed where the sick man lay, there was for him but one subject of interest in the world, and that was the case of poor Hal Windham, as he was commonly called. It was this concentration of thought in the thing in hand, that made Dr. Thomas Browne so welcome by the bed-sides of the sick, both rich and poor. As he bent down and scanned the poor wan face, lined and counter-lined with torture of mind and body, and took one of the long hands which was restlessly plucking at the coverlet in a sort of measured movement, which answered to the low mutters and moans of fitful slumber, that questioning, earnest

gaze, seemed to read, as a book, the countenance and gestures of the sick man. Unlike Sir John Falstaff, "he did not babble of green fields," but murmured that the "eyes were on him, that the fire burned hot, that the toads were jumping after Amphyllis, and she would follow Doll, sweet Doll! and Ned, little Ned!—Amphyllis!" As he repeated her name, Amphyllis bent over him.

"Father, dear father! I have brought the great Doctor, the learned Doctor Thomas Browne."

"And it grieves me to find you so sick, Master Windham. Let us see," he said, placing his large cool hand on the burning brow, "let us see what we can do."

The dark hungry eyes were fastened on the Doctor's face, and he whispered, "Don't you see them, Doctor—the toads—the bees. Ah! ah! Save me! You know all things, and can do all things. Save me! Faugh! there is a monster. See how it runs over me. Don't let it catch Amphyllis—she is so like her mother."

Dr. Thomas Browne signed to Amphyllis. "Go down and summon Giles, my servant. He must mix a potion for me to administer forthwith."

There was a ring of sadness and sympathetic interest in the words which touched Amphyllis to the heart.

"How good you are—how kind," she murmured as Bridget Whitelock left them to deliver the Doctor's message.

"Dr. Browne, are you here? Is it Doctor Browne, Amphyllis?" the sick man cried. "No barber surgeon—no wicked charlatan, in league with the witches and their foul trade."

"Nay, nay," said the Doctor. "Away with such fancies. I am the man you seek; pray God I may help you in your need, Master Windham."

There was something quieting in the very tones of that voice and the touch of that firm strong hand.

Presently the draught was prepared, and the Doctor administered it himself, seating himself by the bed, and holding the poor burning hand in his.

For fully half an hour did he remain thus, Amphyllis kneeling by the chair, with one hand upon the arm, roughly carved in the form of a griffin's head. Outside, the wind rose and fell in terrific blasts—howling in the wide chimneys fiercely, rattling on the lattice as if demanding admittance, and then sinking with the moaning of a wounded creature in the garden below the room where Hal Windham lay.

After a long silence the Doctor spoke. "He is sleeping quietly now. Let him be undisturbed;

and when he wakes administer a hot posset mixed with Rhenish wine and spiced. But no dram—no burning spirits. I will see him again ere long.”

“And do you think he will ever come out of this condition? Dear sir, so kind and good as you are, tell me the truth. Is he under a spell of the Evil One?”

“I do not take so much upon myself as to affirm this; but I have grave fears. I will mention your father’s case to my best friend at Heigham. Methinks his presence would be a consolation to you. I must see him on my own affairs to-morrow, and I will mention your need. Poor child!” the Doctor said, in the tender tones with which he always addressed his own Moll and Bess, “you are young to be witness to a strife like this.”

Amphyllis took one of the Doctor’s hands in her’s, and pressed her lips upon it. Sympathy was so sweet, and sympathy from such a man doubly sweet.

“I would fain come and see your daughter, Mistress Mary, again, if you grant permission.”

“Aye, and that I will, with all my heart; and you shall tell out all your little fears and troubles to my wife, Mistress Dorothy, who will, I know, enter into them, and be glad to welcome you amongst her own children. Have you no brothers nor sisters?”

"Ah! no, dear sir, I am alone in the world, save for him and cousin Bridget. She is kind, but oh! it is but a sorry life. I often wish I were free to go and come as I liked, as your daughters are."

"That grave Puritan below seems to take some care for you."

"Yes, forsooth, too much care," said Amphyllis, resuming the bright saucy manner with which she had taken Tom Browne's heart by storm. "Yes, forsooth, and too much care; he chides me like an infant, and preaches against the world, and shows, and vanity, till I am sick on't. He quarrelled with his father, who was a good churchman and loyal subject, and shut his doors on him."

"That were ill done," said the Doctor. "There is no son of mine who would fail to win an entrance to my house, were he the rankest Roundhead that ever breathed."

"But," said Amphyllis archly, "you would teach your son to keep his preachments to himself."

"Rather I would fain teach him to practise what he preached. Now, I must be gone."

Amphyllis went to the head of the little stairs with the Doctor. From below there came the sound of voices, the sailor's loud and ringing, and as an accompaniment, a low murmur.

"That is Andrew holding forth," said Amphyllis. "Well may Master Browne laugh."

"Nay, nay, mock not, honest Tom," said the Doctor, "for mockery is never good. Now, Giles, man" (to the attendant), "pack up quick, and let us face the storm once more. I have a mind to turn towards Heigham, and sup with my friend there; for I have much I would say to him. You, Tom, may hasten home and let your mother know that I am, as far as you can tell, safe and sound."

Amphyllis stood half-way down the stairs listening to what passed, when the three men came out of the kitchen. Tom caught sight of her by the flickering light of an oil lamp.

He sprang up in a moment, and while the others were talking of departure, and whether the storm had abated enough to allow a torch to be lighted, and Bridget Whitelock was listening to some directions from the Doctor, the young man made the best of his opportunity. He subdued his voice, and it had the tender and sympathetic ring in it which resembled his father's.

"Nay then, fair Amphyllis, standing there on the stairs. I marvel if Jacob, in his dream, saw a fairer angel. Turn not away your head, for I would fain look into your face once more before I go. I would

fain carry this vision over stormy seas, and hear your sweet voice in the thunder of battle as I heard it in the raging of the storm anon. Say, will you forget me or remember me, as I remember you?"

"I will not forget," said Amphyllis gently, and with the simplicity of a child. "I cannot forget," she added; "for one never forgets goodness such as you and your father have shown me this night."

Tom Browne seized the little hand, and bending on one knee, he kissed it reverently.

"I will fetch you to visit my mother," he said, "on the morrow."

"I must not leave my father, if he raves as he has raved to-day; and Cousin Bridget cannot be left alone with a sick man and all household work as well; for Joan, our serving-maid, is absent; and Andrew——"

Tom's manner changed at once.

"Andrew, forsooth! That I stood in his house and so was bound by the law of charity alone kept my hands off him. All coxcombs are bad, but he that vaunteth of his religious life and calls himself a brand plucked from the fire to which he condemns your humble servant, Mistress Phyllis, as your cousin did anon, might have well felt the weight of my arm, methinks a thrashing would not come amiss."

"Now then, my son," said the Doctor from below,

"though the bees love honey they tarry not too long at one blossom. Quick now, Tom."

The sailor with one more kiss on Amphyllis' hand, cleared the low stairs at one leap, and Amphyllis ran up to her father's room.

He was still sleeping quietly, and Amphyllis went to the lattice, and leaning her head against it looked out, that she might watch the figures of the Doctor, his servant, and his son, go down the path to the big gates.

"How brave, how noble they are!" she exclaimed.

The storm within and without seemed lulled to rest. The driving rack of clouds, which had hidden a moon in the first quarter, now parted, and a silvery beam caught the lock of hair, and made it shimmer like gold, as it passed over the upturned face of the girl like an angel's smile. She knelt on, dreaming her dream—the first sweet dream of awakening love, which comes to us all like the first song of a bird at dawn.

Amphyllis had known very little of home joy and happiness. Her father's condition had been such as to cast a blight over his family; and when the mother and the children died, he became so possessed with the idea that the black art had been practised upon him and his children, that he was virtually mad—

mad as many a one has been and is now, from the fever of an over-taxed brain, excited by strong drink, till the balance is lost, and the seeming and the real are mixed together in hopeless confusion.

The home offered by Bridget Whitelock—at the express wish of her dying father—had been an asylum indeed; but after the first few months the young high spirit chafed at the confinement and restraint.

During the preceding winter she had heard of the festivities at the Duke's Palace with a longing natural to youth. Nay, she had seen the roomy coach sent round for the guests by the host himself, filled with happy faces, all eagerness to partake of the hospitality which was as a household word in Norwich at that date. But Amphyllis had no part or lot in these merry meetings.

Her stern mentor, Andrew, bid her repress all such longings, and see the mercy of God in shielding her from temptation. Bridget was more tolerant, and from time to time would gratify Amphyllis's taste for finery by a broad bright ribbon or a piece of lace.

Nevertheless, when Amphyllis sighed for the gaities from which she was shut out, she, too, would look grave, and tell her that there were many quicksands for the young in the associations with the gay and

frivolous, and would encourage her to pursue the studies which in more coherent intervals her father marked out for her.

Now, as Amphyllis thought over her visit to the Doctor, his beautiful house—which, in her eyes, was equal to the Duke's Palace—and recalled every glance and merry word of his gay young sailor son, it was a glimpse into the brighter world which lay outside the walls of the Cringleford cottage, and she was like a young bird pluming its feathers for flight.

A sigh, which ended in a groan, roused her from her dream, and she was at her father's side in an instant.

But the sick man was only turning on his pillow, and soon sank off again into the quiet sleep which the Doctor's draught had brought on as a temporary relief from his painful wanderings of mind and visions of horror.

When Tom reached home his mother and his sister Bess had arrived from the party, and were full of the perils they had encountered from the storm.

"Thy father is on foot, I hope," Mrs. Browne said. "It is unsafe to journey in a coach, or good Mr. Houghton would have sent us home."

"Moll tells us a wondrous pretty girl came all

alone to get help for her sick father ; didst see her Tom ? ”

“ See her ! I am not blind as a mole, I hope though any man might be forgiven were he dazed and dazzled by such beauty as that maiden’s.”

“ What is she like ? ” said Bess ; “ for Moll can only tell us, in her quick eager fashion, that her hair was like gold, and her cheeks like wild roses—and——”

“ Well,” said Tom, interrupting ; “ ask Ned here what he thinks.”

Edward Browne now came in, dropping his long cloak from his shoulders, and turning it over the back of one of the high chairs.

“ I did not see the beauty,” he exclaimed. “ Old Jonas raves like the rest ; for my part, I can scarce look at a fair woman after Mistress Cradock and Mistress Philpot. The Duke’s Palace at Christmas was all agog about them. But, ‘ honest Tom,’ I would not damp thy ardour.”

“ I shall soon damp it with the salt spray again,” Tom tried to say carelessly. “ I hear from Sir Robert Brookes that I must e’en join the ‘ Foresight ’ again in ten days, and she will, most like, have a summons to join the fleet under the Duke of York.”

“ Nay, Tom, I pray not,” said Madam Browne, as she was commonly called. “ You are but just

returned to gladden our hearts, and Ned here is off again. Such vagrant sons as mine sure never lived!"

"Vagrant sons, sweet mother! and yet to your taste, methinks,"—and Edward, the eldest son,—slapped Tom on the shoulder—"or sure you would not have sent this youngster off to see the world at scarce fourteen, and be so proud to hear of all he saw in foreign parts."

"Nay, I do not complain," said Madam Browne. "The children of such a father must e'en be ever on the move, quick to see, and quick to learn. I would sometimes thy father spared himself more. He was not in his bed till near dawn this morning—at least till St. Peter's clock had gone five; and when I asked him why he thus stayed up, till his hands were like ice, he said gravely, that he was so intent upon the dissecting of a monkey, and comparing the parts with those of a man, that he never noticed the time. He said a monkey was not so easy to get perfect in bones and sinew; and then he had to write out his thoughts thereon for the benefit of others."

"Yes," said Edward, with a sigh, "our good father is working for others to reap, that shall come after him. Surely there are few men who labour for truth as he doth."

"We must not grudge him that labour," said Madam Browne tenderly. "There are times when I have to take heed; lest I be too much set up, when I remember I am the wife of him who wrote in his youth the 'Religio Medici.'"

"Ah! ha! sweet mother," said Tom, "and well you may be proud. Did you not teach my father that one at least of his theories was a bubble? Dost think that he now would fain be an oak, or other forest tree, and know not the sweets of a tender loving wife?"

"Foolish boy!" said Madam Browne with a smile and a tap of her fan upon Tom's cheek.

"Well, I am for following Bess's example, and turning in for a good sleep. The storm is abating, and if it were not, what is a storm to a sailor born? Wish me good-night, and pleasant dreams, mother."

"Dreams of the angel, eh, Tom?"

"Ah! let me hope for them. Now, Bess, let us ascend to the heights together."

"And be as quiet as you can be, Tom, for the little babe is very restless with his teeth, and has disturbed poor Dolly, who is fretful and pining, sweet lamb."

"I'll bear it in mind," said Tom; but alas for his good intentions, he was whistling and singing a

snatch of a then popular song before he had reached the upper corridor, on which the bed-rooms opened.

Dolly and Charles began to vociferate that they wanted brother Tom ; and Mary, who had retired to her room, came out to quiet the children, and to ask how Tom had sped on his way to Cringleford.

"Ah, Moll! so well, that I will make a cruise round there again, and bring back a rich freight with me—eh, Moll?"

"Methinks you are all gone distraught about this maiden," said Edward, who came upstairs at this moment. "You should have seen Mistress Cradock to-night. Mr. Howard has said she would carry off the palm at court ; and forsooth, I do not wonder."

"The court," said honest Tom, with a shrug of his shoulders. "The court! and I say all decent women should shun the court now-a-days. Good-night, sister mine! good-night!"



TRUE OR FALSE ?

THE town of Bury St. Edmunds is well known to the student of history, and has a halo of romance thrown round it, when we read that its ancient name of Broderickworth was changed to commemorate the burial within its abbey walls of the saint, Edmund the King and Martyr.

In Bury, or St. Edmund's Bury, as it is often called, King Edmund, after a gallant resistance made against the heathen of the Northern seas, was taken prisoner, bound to a tree, and shot to death with many arrows. His martyrdom, we read in the history of those early times, made him the St. Sebastian of the English legend; his figure gleamed from the pictured windows of every church along the Eastern coast, and the stately abbey of the Black Benedictines rose over his relics.

Those were wild and lawless days, days when all questions were settled by the sword, and when all along that level country which skirts the Northern sea, the people were always watching for the foe,

and standing prepared to resist him. Later in the centuries, on a day far back still, but nearer our own time as we count nearness, the pious monks of St.



ABBEY GATE.

Peter's Abbey at Gloucester went to Berkley and craved the body of the king, Edward the Second, who had been foully murdered in the Castle. They

bore the precious remains reverently on an open bier to the gates of the abbey, drawn by stags which had never been before in harness; and there the king was buried, and a shrine raised, to which so many pilgrims flocked, that a hostelry, still called "The New Inn," was built to accommodate them, at the eastern side of the Great Cross, which stood where the four streets diverge to the four points of the compass. And now, on this spring day of sixteen hundred and sixty-five, the people of the old town of Bury were also watching for the defeat of an enemy. An Evil Presence had been amongst them, and they were standing in excited groups outside the Shire Hall, where His Majesty's able and benevolent judge, Sir Matthew Hale, sat to give the case fair hearing, and to decide whether it should be life or death, for those who were believed to be in league with the arch enemy and traitor, the Prince of Devils, for the destruction of the bodies and souls of the innocent and helpless.

It is, I think, far easier for us to realize, that is, treat as *fact*, the murder of King Edmund by the arrows of the pitiless Danes, than the judicial murder of two poor defenceless women, who stood accused of the sin of witchcraft, thereby compassing the death of little children.

The one cruel deed of savage vengeance belongs to the time when such acts were the rule and not the exception in warfare. It lies so far back in the mist of that dark period, across which the light of those who held to the faith of the Lord, glimmers but faintly, though here and there a star shines out with a steady radiance, like our half-mythical Arthur, and less visionary Alfred the Great and Good.

But this March day of which I write is scarcely more than two hundred years ago. It was the time of awakening in every direction. The love of the beautiful in literature and art was spreading amongst those classes who had formerly cared only for warlike feats, or excessive show in dress and entertainments. John Evelyn at Wotton, with his gardens, and his treasures of every kind, was leading his quiet meditative life, and Milton, writing his great epic poem. Lord Bacon's philosophy, with its calm wisdom, was making its way like a stream, as he prophesied it would, in the next age, through the rough obstacles of ignorance and superficial teaching. The Word of God had, as the Puritans would have said, free course amongst the people; while the Church, recovering from the troubles of the last decade, was lifting her head like a stately tree which the storm had threatened to destroy, and many good and learned divines were now

standing in their old places, whence the Puritans of the Commonwealth had driven them. Such was the temper of the time in this year of grace 1665, and yet, underlying all the enlightenment and refinement of men like Sir Matthew Hale, and all the religious zeal of men like Richard Baxter, and all the philosophical research and benevolence of men like the author of the "*Religio Medici*," there was a vein of superstition which defiled in some degree, the otherwise pure current of their lives, and cast a shadow over the brightness which their work shed over their own day, and onward to ours. And this superstition, this belief in the supernatural, may have taken other forms since that day, and have been modified, as all things are modified or moulded by the circumstances of the times. But we cannot say that superstition is dead, even now. We have only to open the records published by the Psychological Society, to assure ourselves of this. Nay, more, we have only to look into our own inner selves at times, and find lurking there something beyond our sight, though within our consciousness, which is a relic of the old belief, which had so strong a hold on the hearts of men of refinement and learning in this seventeenth century, that they could not choose but confess it, when the need arose.

As we look back to the signs and tokens which showed that the black art was practised, we may laugh, and indeed, the subject has its ridiculous side. But to all thoughtful minds, the sadness predominates, and certainly, the trial of the two witches at Bury St. Edmunds, on this bright March day, was no light matter to the benevolent judge on the bench, nor to the learned physician whom he had summoned from Norwich.

Trials were not conducted in a very regular fashion in those times ; for witnesses were allowed to start up and give some fresh piece of evidence against the accused as it pleased them.

The two widows from Lowestoft, Rose Cullender and Amy Duny, were standing in the dock, when a little movement in the crowd assembled showed that a person of importance had arrived.

Sir Edmund Bacon and Lord Cornwallis rose to make room for the new-comer, and greeted him in a friendly fashion, while a murmur ran through the court—that Dr. Thomas Browne had arrived from Norwich.

The evidence had been partly taken on the previous day, and was not concluded. It went to show that the children of Thomas Pacey and Elizabeth Durant, were bewitched by the prisoners. They fell into

violent screeching fits, and when brought into court were stricken dumb, till after the conviction of the witches. Thus conveniently escaping cross-examination.

It will be unnecessary to state here all the charges which were brought against the two women, who listened to them as if in a dream, and with a dim vague wonder in their poor old faces, which the earnest eyes of the Norwich doctor, fastened on them, was not slow to read.

It is a curious fact that witches often confessed to the witchcraft of which they were accused. That is, assented to the details which were read over to them, and suffered the documents to be signed in their name.

In this instance, however, both women declared their innocence. I quote from an account of the trial, the evidence of the mother of one of the children, which will be a fair sample of the rest.

The mother of William Durant, said she had given her boy to Amy Duny, to look after during a temporary absence, and had given her particular directions to prevent any harm being done to the child. On being asked why she thought it necessary to give such directions, she said that Amy Duny had the reputation of being a witch. Mistress Durant then continued :—

“Finding all my orders were disobeyed, I flew into a rage on my return, and told her I was angry and should not pay what I had agreed. Whereupon she threatened me, and departed out of the house cursing me. That very night my boy fell into strange swoounding fits, and was held in such a terrible manner that I was near to break my heart. I went to fetch an exceeding clever doctor—Doctor Jacob—who lives in Yarmouth, and has a great knowledge of bewitched children. He bid me hang up the blanket my boy lay in, by the chimney-corner all day, and put him to bed, rolled in it, at night; and Dr. Jacob said if I found aught in it, I was to throw it into the fire. And, my lord, when I took down the blanket as I was told, out jumped a big toad, which scampered and clawed up and down the hearth. I was frightened out of my wits, but a young man happening to be with me, he whipped it up with the tongs and held it on the fire. Then, my lord, there was a terrible noise, and flashing like gunpowder, and a sound as if a pistol had gone off, and a fearsome stench—and then the toad was seen no more!

“The very next day a young woman came to see me—a kinswoman of Amy Duny—and said the old creature was in a lamentable state, her face all

scorched with fire, and sitting in her smock alone in her cottage. So I set off to find out if it was true; and surely it was true as the Gospel. But I feigned not to know what was wrong, and asked her how she came to be in such a condition, with face and legs scorched and burned with fire. And Amy then grunted and snarled at me, my lord, and said she had me to thank for it, and that I should soon bury some of my blessed children, and walk myself on crutches! My lord, my boy got well as soon as the toad was burnt; but, woe is me! my little Bess, of ten years old, was seized in the same manner as her brother, and did nought but scream out, 'Amy—Amy—Amy Duny!' till we were near mad with grief. I went up to the old witch, and she shook her fist at me, and said, '*The child will die, I say!*'

"This was Saturday, my lord, and on Monday my Bess was cold and stark, and all from the craft of that wicked, wicked old woman; and I am struck with lameness in both legs, all along with the same black art."

All eyes were turned upon the prisoners as Mistress Durant burst into a passion of weeping, and signs of sympathy were seen on many faces.

Dr. Browne listened attentively, and made notes from time to time in a book he carried with him.

One of the gentlemen who had gone to Norwich on the night of the gale leaned across and spoke to him, but he only shook his head and did not answer. The question addressed to him was—

“Is that lameness assumed? Watch her.”

But Samuel Pacey was speaking now, a man of undoubted respectability, a Lowestoft merchant; and his evidence was evidently given out of real belief in the truth of what he saw.

He said his daughter had offended Amy Duny in some childish fashion, and that she had almost immediately lost the use of her legs, and had violent fits, feeling most extreme pain in her stomach, and screeching like a whelp, and not like a human being or sensible creature.

“And,” continued Samuel Pacey, “my little maid was fair as a lily and sweet as a rose before those evil eyes were upon her. Can you marvel, gentlemen and my lord, that my father’s heart sinks within me? Then my child’s jaw was tight shut, and Amy Duny said I must force a tap into it to give her nourishment. But the worst is that my poor child’s sister had the like fits, and screamed for Amy Duny and Rose Cullender; and then they vomit, after extreme coughing, pins and twopenny nails.”

Forty crooked pins and the identical flat-headed nail were then produced, and Samuel Pacey swore that they had been vomited in the manner described.

"And then," Samuel Pacey continued, "when I was aweary of the sight of my poor babes' tortures I sent them to the house of my sister, Margaret Arnold, who lived in Yarmouth. There my youngest pretty one was flown at by a bee, which tried to get down her mouth, and set her screeching in a terrible fashion. Soon after she discharged a twopenny nail, which she said the bee had forced down her throat. At times, too, flies brought crooked pins to my eldest child, and she cried out that she saw the Devil's mice, which none else could see, and she would catch them up in her apron and throw them into the fire. And, most fearful thing of all, Amy Duny, though unseen by others, was always to be seen by her, and urged her to cut her throat and rid herself of life."

A thrill of horror ran through the court, and it was deepened by the declaration of one of the lawyers that, on testimony like Pacey's and Durant's, a warrant had been granted by Sir Edmund Bacon, one of the Justices of the Peace for the county of Suffolk, and the two prisoners being apprehended,

and examined from head to foot, *Devil's marks* had been found upon them.

The prisoners were undefended, and the case for the prosecution was virtually closed. But Chief Justice Hale, ever ready to give a fair chance to the accused, determined to take the opinion of some learned men present, and in this very irregular manner, Sergeant Keeling, in reply to the question, said :

"I am satisfied with the nature of the evidence, but I think there are some doubtful points, and that the prisoners should be acquitted. That is to say, I doubt not the facts of the case as regards the bewitched children, but I doubt if the guilt be satisfactorily brought home to the women."

And then, when Sergeant Keeling sat down, Sir Matthew Hale called upon Dr. Thomas Browne.

He rose with great dignity, and with the air of one who would not allow himself to be biassed in what he conceived to be right judgment.

All faces were turned toward him, and the prisoners, who scanned that noble countenance, thought they read pity and kindness in those wide-open hazel eyes and sweet, firm mouth. They were right, poor things! A tenderer and more kindly heart never beat ; but as he had said to the two men who had

come to Norwich on the night of the storm, he would speak what he knew, and testify to what he believed to be true, God helping him.

"Dr. Thomas Browne," said the learned Judge, "I call upon you to say whether you deem the accusation to be true or false—that these children were, and are, bewitched by the prisoners, Amy Duny and Rose Cullender, grounding, be it observed, your opinion on experience and the deep study of cause and effect for which you stand so justly famous."

"My lord and gentlemen," said the Doctor, with a graceful bow, acknowledging the compliment, which brought the ever ready colour to his cheek, "My Lord, I would say, without preamble, that I am clearly of opinion that these children were bewitched. For, my lord, this is—alas! that I should be constrained to say it—no uncommon evil. In the country of Denmark there has, of late, been a great discovery of witches, who take the like means of afflicting persons, *i.e.*, by conveying pins into them—crooked pins like these" (taking one in his hand), "together with needles and nails. I say, further, that I believe that the Devil, ever ready to work mischief doth work upon the bodies of men and women upon a natural foundation. I would say, that he doth so stir up and excite such humours, superabounding in their

bodies to a great extent, whereby he doth, in an extraordinary manner, afflict them with such distempers as *their bodies are most subject to*, as particularly appeared in these children. For I conceive that these fits of swoounding are natural after their sort, but heightened to a great excess, by the subtlety of the Devil, co-operating with the malice of those we term witches, at whose instance he does these villainies."

Then Dr. Thomas Browne sat down. The profound impression which he made was evident by the silence which followed. Every word that fell from his lips had its full weight, and there was not a person in the court who did not feel that the doom of the prisoners was sealed.

The hungry desire, which the accusers felt to leave no stone unturned, that might ensure the condemnation of the women, was now seen by the accusers asserting that it would be for the satisfaction of all present, if the children, who were still dumb, and falling into fits, were touched by one of the witches, for immediately, without seeing who touched them, the clenched hands would open and the tongues be loosed.

The experiment was tried, and was triumphantly regarded as a success, when a gentleman present ventured to suggest that the experiment had not

been fairly made. He begged permission of the Judge and Court to repeat it, and requested the assistance of the Lord Cornwallis, Sir Edmund Bacon, and Sergeant Keeling.

These gentlemen then repaired to a further part of the hall, where one of the children was in a convulsion, and Amy Duny was taken from the bar, and brought to the spot. An apron was put over the patient's eyes, and the clenched hand was touched, but not by poor Amy Duny. Instantly the fingers opened and the fit ceased.

Sergeant Keeling then openly declared that, in the case of that child at least, the fits were an imposture, and, speaking in the name of Sir Edmund Bacon and the Lord Cornwallis, he prayed the Judge to give this fresh evidence due weight.

But Samuel Pacey was on his feet at once, and said :

"My lord, the little maid was deceived by a *suspicion* that the witch touched her. Many a time I have noted that, although dumb and convulsed, the understanding of the children is perfect."

In the same irregular fashion fresh witnesses volunteered to come forward, and vied with each other in stories of their carts miraculously stopped on the road, geese destroyed, fish carried back into the sea after they were caught, and chimneys at Lowestoft

blown down, through the evil machinations of the prisoners at the bar.

So the whole tissue of falsehood, based on superstition, was complete. The prisoners were asked if they had anything to say, and Amy Duny, without any hesitation, replied, "Nothing material to anything that was proved against them."

Sir Matthew Hale then addressed the jury. There can be no doubt that the words of the man he had summoned from Norwich went far to strengthen him in the direction which he gave. He said—

"I will not repeat the evidence, lest by so doing I wrong the one side or the other. But this I tell you, gentlemen of the jury, you have two things to inquire after—first, whether these children are bewitched or no ; second, whether the prisoners at the bar were guilty thereof. That there are such creatures as witches I make no doubt at all ; the Scriptures affirm it, and the wisdom of all nations has provided laws against such persons, which is, to my thinking, an argument of their confidence in such a crime. Such hath been the judgment of this kingdom—as appears by the Act of Parliament—which provideth punishment proportionate to the quality of the offence. Observe, I pray you, gentlemen, the evidence before you with all strictness and care, and I desire the great God of

heaven to direct your hearts in this weighty matter ; for to condemn the innocent, and to let the guilty go free, were both an abomination to the Lord."

After this very short "direction" the jury departed, to return in half an hour with the verdict of Guilty against both prisoners.

When the court broke up on this bright spring afternoon, Dr. Thomas Browne separated himself from those who were eagerly discussing the trial, and walked away to rest his weary mind. It was over now ; his testimony had been asked for, and he had given it ; but not the less was his heart heavy within him.

The March sunshine of the sweet spring afternoon lay upon the massive gate of the Abbey, and cast long shadows on the ground from the trees, where the russet buds of the spring-time were showing in the lower branches a suspicion of green. The whole scene in the court he had just left came before him in sharp contrast with the beautiful world around him.

The faces of the two women, scarred with many wrinkles, were present to him, and for them there would soon be a terrible punishment for the life they had led, and for the evil they had done.

But what if they were innocent of the malicious

designs imputed to them ? what if—though witchcraft were true—the accusations in this particular instance were false ? These very thoughts troubled him, and he hastened on as if to escape from them, till he followed the course of a small stream, spanned by a stone bridge, known as the Abbot's Bridge.



THE ABBOT'S BRIDGE.

Here, leaning on the parapet, the Doctor felt soothed by the murmur of the water as it flowed beneath the old stone arches, where ivy hung in graceful festoons, and the birds were twittering in the budding trees about their nests.

The Doctor's eye was always keen to mark the

most trivial things in nature. Such interest as he had in every living creature upon the face of the earth, was enough, at all times, to divert him from anxiety or trouble. Now his searching glance was directed to a kingfisher, poised above mid-stream, that presently, making a swift dash, with unerring aim, brought up a struggling fish in its beak. To decide what fish it was, was all but impossible ; but the kingfisher made a flight towards the trunk of one of the beeches near the bridge, and the Doctor saw with delight the skilful way in which the bird adroitly hit the head of his prey against the trunk, and quieted its struggles, before flying off with it to its nest.

Then the same watchful eyes turned toward the bole of a birch on the opposite side, where a little clapper, or *betula carptor*, was pecking at the first sprouting of the branches.

"The merry little creature. I must tell Bob I have seen him. He saith, when he sees any dried specimens, 'I would fain see the creatures living.' How full and manifold are the works of God in this world. Would that the dark shadows did not lie athwart its brightness!"

And then, with a sigh, the Doctor walked back towards the town.

He passed St. James's church, and crossed the

churchyard, looking at the tombstones with the



NORMAN TOWER, BURY ST. EDMUNDS.

same keen glance, which was quick to read the inscriptions and observe the date. The great and

overwhelming mystery of death—and of the vast multitude always passing into the unknown and untried life—seemed to press upon the physician as he looked round him upon the silent company lying beneath the daisied turf.

Well skilled in the history of the past—a man who had travelled far beyond the average of those days—deeply impressed with the necessity of inquiring into the facts of history and their effect upon all the human race—Dr. Thomas Browne had that very day, by his evidence, weighed down the balance on the side of justice, as he believed it, and the few grains of mercy which had been granted to the two helpless women were of no avail. He that studied and meditated constantly on the best means of ameliorating suffering, and recalling the sick from their beds of suffering to lives of usefulness, had, as it were, signed the death-warrant of Amy Duny and Rose Cullender. Was there any misgiving in his heart when he was accosted by Sir Edmund Bacon?

“Why, Doctor!” he exclaimed, “good friend, meditating amongst the tombs! We have sought you high and low. The Chief Justice bids you sup with him, and there will be a goodly company at table, I’ll warrant. And, hark you! the good woman whose

legs were paralysed, has thrown away her crutches, and is as brisk as a young maid ; and as to the children, they have found their tongues, and their limbs are straightened ; so verily, the dumb speak and the lame walk. You look mighty grave, my friend ; come, and let us have the benefit of your rare wit and experience."



ABBEY RUINS.

"Nay, I must start for Norwich. I have so many sick there, and one case much on my mind—a man named Windham, who lived in St. Edmund's Bury up till a very recent time."

"Windham, Windham !" exclaimed Sir Edmund Bacon, "I have heard of him. A would-be alchemist

sent raving mad by the loss of wife and children, reported to be bewitched. Poor creature, he comes of a good stock, but wasted his substance like the prodigal of old. See there, we are near the tomb where the wife and children lie."

Then Sir Edmund Bacon passed round to the foot of a heavy stone lying flat, and giving that terrible sense of imprisonment and presence, which, if fanciful, is irresistible.

"See here," Sir Edmund said, and he pointed to the words cut on the stone below a roughly carved skeleton's head and bones.

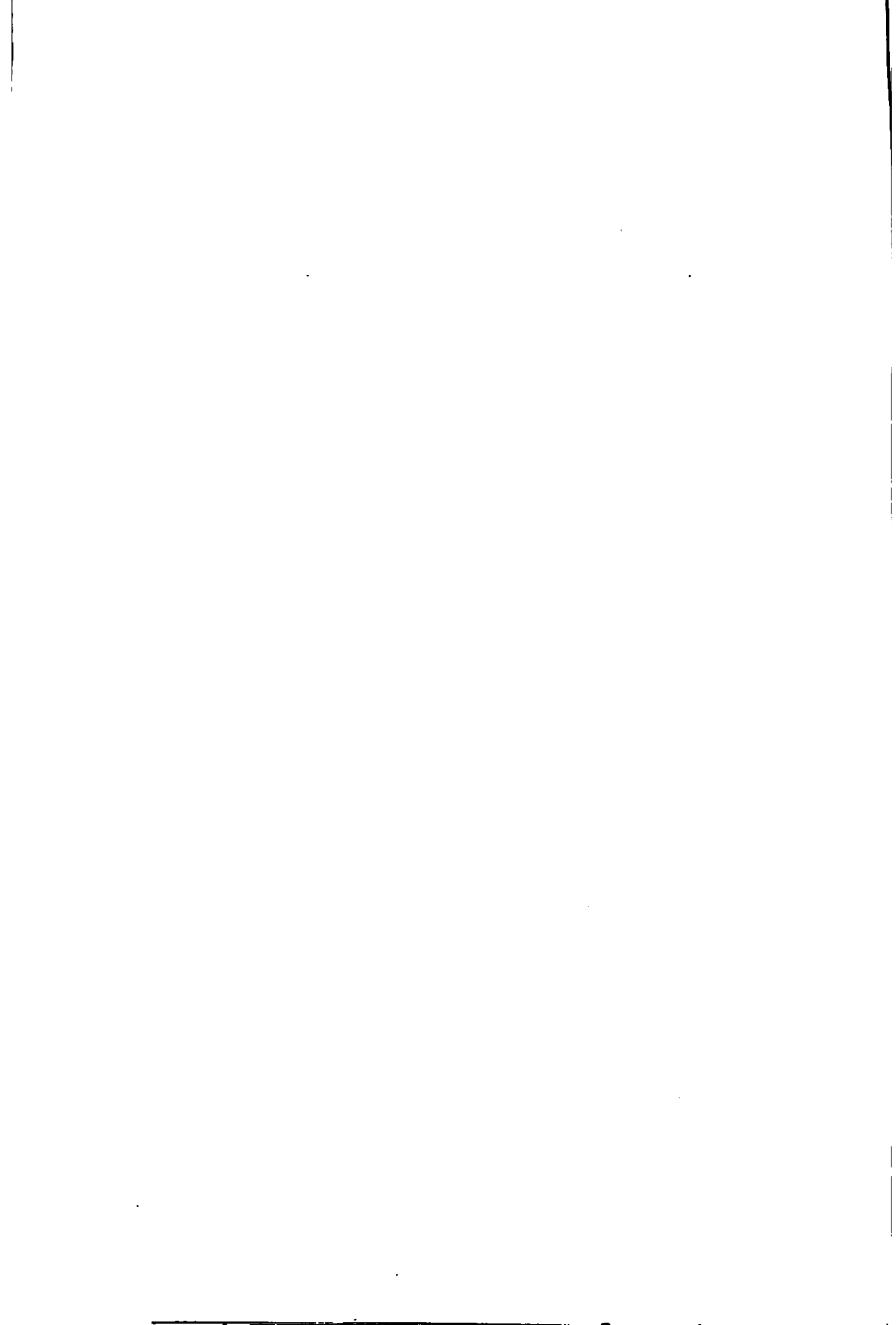
"Here lieth the body of Amphyllis, the true and dear wife of Henry Windham, gentleman, of the town of St. Edmund's Bury. With her also resteth the mortal part of her two babes, Dorothea and Edward. They sickened and died under a spell, which the Prince of Darkness worketh with. But Christ the Lord shall reverse the doom, when to meet Him full of joyance, these three shall leave the tomb."

"Ah, forsooth!" exclaimed the Doctor, "it is the same cry, the same evil; you do not doubt it, Sir Edmund?"

"I doubt in the case of Hal Windham. His brain is sick, and no marvel, with his manner of life. But, thank God, that poor wretch whom he accused died



GATEWAY AND CHAPTER HOUSE, BURY ST. EDMUNDS.



a natural death in her bed, and so we are spared a sickening scene like that of to-day."

"I say Amen to that," was the Doctor's fervent rejoinder ; "I say Amen, and I pray God that I be not again called on to testify against old creatures like those two, however great their villainy. The Windham aforesaid has an uncommon fair daughter, Amphyllis, named, it seems, after her mother. She hath escaped the evil spell, thanks be to God. It would be a grievous thing indeed to see so fair a creature smitten."

The two gentlemen were now turning out of St. James's churchyard towards the Judge's lodgings. So important a person as Sir Edmund Bacon could not but attract attention, and the sedate figure by his side was no less an object of interest.

So deeply seated in the minds of the poorer classes especially, was the dread of witchcraft, that the great Doctor who had given his opinion that day was looked upon as one who had conferred a special favour on the poor folk of St. Edmund's Bury, though the accused women were Lowestoft bred.

"May God bless your honour," was heard from several as Dr. Browne passed, and one woman, pressing forward with a child in her arms, said :

"An' it please your honour to lay your hand on the child, for sure it would bring a blessing."

But the Doctor turned away with the bright colour on his face which was always so quick to mount there. He did not at that moment feel in the mood for eulogy. He passed on murmuring—

"Poor fool! alas! poor fool!"

No persuasion sufficed to tempt the Doctor to sit late at the Judge's table. But finding the postboys and his outrider had fear of highwaymen if belated on the road, he consented to wait till daybreak the next morning before he departed. Dr. Browne went early to his bed, and after some hours of sound refreshing sleep was ready to start on his homeward journey before the old clock in the belfry of St. James's church had chimed six.

Early as it was, two men were waiting in the yard of the inn, watching for him. He recognised them at once, as the two gentlemen who had driven post-haste to Norwich to try to influence him to give an opinion in favour of the accused, one of whom had put the question in court to him, on the previous day.

As the Doctor was stepping into his chariot, one of these men advanced.

"Sir," he said, "it is too late now. We prayed

you in vain to consider well what you delivered as an opinion."

"And, gentlemen," was the reply, "I pray you to believe I *did* consider well. God is my witness."

"It will be remembered against you, Dr. Thomas Browne, in the years to come, this cruel deed wrought on the weak and defenceless."

The Doctor waved his hand.

"Enough, sirs, nor tempt me to make rejoinder which I may regret hereafter." There was a flash of anger in the Doctor's eyes which might well show that, mild and composed as his manner generally was, the lion in him could be roused on occasion.

"Forward!" he called to the postboys, and then the great lumbering chariot rolled off on its way to Norwich.



TWILIGHT DREAMS.

AMPHYLLIS sat by the lattice window of the low-roofed bed-chamber in the Cringleford cottage on the afternoon of the day which followed the storm.

She held some needle-work in her hand, but she was not very industrious. A stitch every five minutes was absently set ; and indeed no one can look out of the window and work at the same time !

Amphyllis's view was bounded by the brick walls festooned with ivy which shut in the garden, strewn with twigs and branches of shrubs, and scraps of mortar and tiling ; for the roof of an outhouse at the side of the garden had been lifted off and flung down by the wind on the ground below, exposing to sight a vast amount of rubbish which had been collecting there for years. The outhouse, like the cottage, was dilapidated and decayed, and Andrew, when he heard Bridget bewailing the destruction of the place, said she need not concern herself, as he had intended for some time to pull it down and rebuild a larger room on the foundation.

Bridget wondered where the money was to be found for this; but she said nothing, knowing Andrew would not have answered questions had she asked them.

Andrew had, as we know, been banished from the cottage in his father's life, because he had vexed the stout old Royalist and zealous churchman by his Puritan profession, and when he openly sided with the rebels and accepted duty in one of the churches where all ornaments and order had been abolished, he vowed he would never look into his son's face again. And in spite of all that Bridget could say, that vow was rigidly kept. It was to prevent Andrew from having any part or lot in the cottage that made Mr. Whitelock turn to his relations at Bury St. Edmund's, and ordered that Bridget should give them a home and provide for them.

But though the letter of his instructions had been fulfilled, the spirit was certainly absent. Andrew quietly came to his father's funeral, took his place as chief mourner, and prayed and preached by the open grave, regardless of the uneasy gestures of the officiating clergyman, who being a man of peace and disliking a scene, did not take any forcible means, as some would have done, to stop Andrew's mouth.

Andrew Whitelock was one of those people who, with a quiet and dogged perseverance, gain their

point. Bridget might as well 'have tried to stop an incoming tide as to prevent her brother from taking his place at the cottage. She did, indeed, suggest that her father's wishes ought to be carried out, but Andrew would reply he had to obey the behests of a higher power; that his work lay near, and in the neighbourhood of Norwich, and that he should come and go as he listed,

Not only did Andrew Whitelock assume the duties of head of the house, but he also assumed the place of his little cousin's mentor and spiritual guide. He ignored the presence of the half-mad invalid, except by pouring forth long exordiums which he believed to be prayers in his behalf.

The only consolation which Amphyllis could find in this state of things was, that Andrew was not always at the cottage. There were intervals of rest from his presence, and he generally was away from Friday to Monday on a preaching mission at some of the conventicles where the Puritans gathered together their now scattered flocks.

He had only returned on the afternoon of the storm to find Amphyllis gone to Norwich for the Doctor. He had been greatly disturbed, as we know, and followed her to the Doctor's house, and formed one of her escort home again.

The gay, merry sailor had been an additional

vexation, and ever since Andrew had been, as Amphyllis said, enough to worry her to death, preaching and scolding.

As the day wore on, Amphyllis had grown more restless, and repeated a hundred times to herself, "I thought he would have come ere now."

It was a quiet day with the invalid, and he lay dozing in a state of half-consciousness which the Doctor's medicine had no doubt induced. He was too weak to say much, but the fever was for the time subdued, and Bridget had left Amphyllis in charge while she looked after domestic matters in the kitchen, for she divided the duties of the household with Amphyllis and one faithful attendant, who had been summoned to the death-bed of a relation who lived at a village near Bury St. Edmunds.

As the clock struck four, Amphyllis rose and gave her father the prescribed draught, saying :

"You are better to-day, dear father."

"I want the Doctor," was the response. "Fetch him again."

"He will return without fetching, if he deems it needful," was the reply. "He is too great a physician to summon often, father ; let us be thankful he came to us when he did."

But the heavy eyelids closed again, and Amphyllis

resumed her seat at the window. Above the wall was a clear bright sky, against which the leafless branches of some tall poplars were traced in feathery distinctness, while the high-pitched roof of the Mill, at the back of which they grew, could be seen to the left.

"It is a fair bright afternoon, just such as often comes after a storm, as the proverb has it," Amphyllis said again, in a low voice meant only for herself. "So fair! If Bridget can come to watch, I would fain run over to the Mill to see if there is damage done there. Mistress Howse must have been much frightened. Aye, dear! I would I could see the Doctor again; but as the need is past, I must not summon him."

The old gates opened in the middle as Amphyllis reached this point in her soliloquy, and with a thrill of joy at her heart she saw the figure of Tom Browne appear.

He saw her also, and doffed his cap and smiled—such a smile! It was like the sunlight upon the salt sea waves he loved so well; and Amphyllis smiled back again, and then withdrew from the lattice. Her first impulse was to run downstairs and open the door; then maidenly modesty kept her back, and she took up her work, and made an attempt to put the needle through the sarcenet which she was running in many little tucks for a hood for Bridget. Her hand

trembled, however, and her face was flushed like a damask rose when Bridget put her head in at the door.

"Prythee, Amphyllis, hasten down. I am in my work-a-day gown, and my hands are not fit to wait on a brave gentleman like the Doctor's son, for he I believe it is. Run quick, Phyllis. Dost hear me?"

"I hear, Bridget ; but there is no such hot haste ; he can wait, I warrant. And then there is father—he cannot be left untended.

"I will see to him," said Bridget. "It is not often you fail in readiness, Amphyllis, to do my bidding. It is hard work in the house, when Joan is absent."

The tone was reproachful, and Amphyllis loved Bridget too well to vex her.

"I will go down," she said. "I have just made father swallow the draught, and he is gone off again."

"Aye, I fear me he will sleep away his life ; but it is better than raving as yesterday. Hark ! he knocks again. Run, Phyllis."

Amphyllis obeyed, and opening the door, stood face to face with Tom Browne.

"Good-day to you, Mistress Windham. I bear a message from my mother to you."

"Prythee walk in, sir," Amphyllis said demurely. "There is no one in the parlour."

She led the way into the room, and Tom holding his cap in his hand, played somewhat nervously with the feather. Although in his Majesty's service, and an officer on board the good ship "Foresight," there was not much in his dress when ashore to mark him as a sailor; it was perhaps a little less elaborate in the matter of ribbons and lace; and his hair, which was of a rich chestnut, curled in shorter masses, and did not hang so low on his shoulders. Tom Browne was not, as we have seen, slow of speech generally; but somehow his words did not come as glibly as usual, now he stood in the presence of his fair angel. He little guessed how her heart was beating under the snowy muslin which filled in her low-cut bodice of black velvet. The golden tresses of hair fell at the back of her head in all their luxuriance, and were gathered up in front under a little pointed cap.

"Will you not be seated, sir?" she said, as Tom stood, uncertain what to do or say next.

"Nay! you must sit and I must kneel; is not that fitting for a queen?"

"Alas! I am no queen," said Amphyllis, rallying. "Only a poor maiden with a sick father, and but few friends."

"You have friends, if you will deign to accept their friendliness; my mother, Mistress Dorothy

Browne, would fain have the honour of a visit from you this very day."

"It is exceeding good and kind of Mistress Browne; but how can I leave the house when my father lies so sick, and only my cousin to minister to him? He is less fevered to-day, which he owes to the great physician's attention; but he may break out at any moment, and I dare not be out of reach."

"My father thinks there is no cause for instant alarm, I know—the danger to life is not pressing. I pray you come. We shall have a merry party at supper."

But Amphyllis shook her head.

"Another time, perhaps, not now; though I feel that such gay doings are not for me."

"They *shall* be for you, if you love them, I warrant; but consider I depart again to join my ship on Monday. This is Wednesday, and the time is short. I go out to fight, as we believe; and who knows whether a sabre cut may not end it? You would be sorry, perhaps, then that you had refused a last wish."

Amphyllis felt like one in a dream. All unawares had this new element come into her young life. Only the day before she had never seen the Brownes, though the Doctor's name was even then a household word in Norwich, and famous very far beyond it.

But Amphyllis had no personal interest in him. Indeed, her father's raving for his help had rather associated the name with distress and trouble.

But it was never to be so again. That name was now to hold its sway over Amphyllis through all her life, and be associated for ever with the great gale, and the struggling walk towards the city to seek the man on whom her poor distraught father set his hope, and who had shown his skill in alleviating suffering, if not in saving life.

"I go to serve under His Highness of York, and if we can thrash those rascally Dutch, we will do it, and praise God for it. There is some heart in fighting an enemy like those Hollanders, I can tell you. But say, will you not come?"

"Nay, I cannot leave the house to-day, save for a few moments; it would be false to my trust. For did my father break out again, Bridget would be alone."

"Alone! Where then is that smooth-faced divine, with his straight mouth, which looks as if it could not curve into a smile? I'd like to tussle him a bit." And Tom Browne laughed his merry sonorous laugh, having forgotten his shyness in Amphyllis's presence in the picture he drew of Andrew.

"My cousin is absent to-day at Thorpe, on t'other side of the city. He preaches there in a conventicle."

Tom shrugged his shoulders. "An' he does not ask me to listen, he is welcome. Well, if I give up to day, I will cling to hope for to-morrow; I will be here by ten o' the clock and escort you to our house. You will not find my father there, for a king's messenger arrived as I left the house, and he will be on the road to St. Edmunds Bury at day dawn, to give his evidence as to witchcraft. There are two old hags under trial by Sir Matthew Hale, more's the crying shame."

Amphyllis was not unmindful of her duties as hostess, and offered Tom Browne refreshment.

More for the pleasure of taking it from her hand than for hunger he accepted the offer, and watched her as she went to the corner cupboard and took down a silver tankard and a small richly chased tray or salver, with which she disappeared through a door opening into the kitchen.

Tom Browne followed the dainty figure as it vanished, and then threw himself full-length on an old settle by the window. Young men and maidens could not lounge in chairs or on sofas in those days. The straightback narrow chair was not made for luxurious repose. Tom Browne looked round the low dark room with its cross-beams of oak and panelled walls. There were few bright things in it.

Everything was sombre and heavy in character. The western sunshine managed to struggle through one of the small lattice windows and lighted upon a knot of bright coloured cherry ribbon which lay on the shelf or bracket by the open hearth. By the ribbon was a prayer-book, bound in thick brown calf, and Tom Browne started up to examine it, as he thought it belonged to Amphyllis. On the first page was written "Amphyllis Windham, her book, St. Edmunds Bury, 1640." Beneath was traced in smaller and more delicately formed letters, "This book is now mine, Amphyllis Windham, daughter of the above deare mother, who departed this life, June 25, 1659." Tom Browne put the knot of ribbon into his deep pocket and had the book in his hand, when Amphyllis returned, but he closed it hastily, as if he were detected n prying into matters not intended for his eye.

Amphyllis quietly pushed the book aside and placed the cup and salver on the bracket.

"You love your prayer-book then, Mistress Amphyllis, nor throw in your lot with Master Andrew Soberface?"

"Do I not love my prayer-book and my church?" she said. "I love to go to the prayers at the great Christ Church, and it is but seldom I have the chance, for Bridget holds to the parish church."

"We will go together to the Cathedral, fair lady," Tom said; "if you will pass to-morrow with us, we will show you many brave sights. The duke's palace—have you been there?"

"Ah, no!" said Amphyllis; "not I. Last Christmas I heard of the big coach Mr. Howard sent round to take the ladies to the palace. I caught sight of it once, and I would fain have been sitting within it; all dressed to go to the dance and the feast. Mistress Howse, at the Mill, has a kinsman of higher degree, who lives in the city, and even she went to the feast. I saw her brave dress, and some pearls she wore braided in her dark hair. Ah, me! but all those gay doings are not for such as me!"

"As I live, they shall be; if I come ashore next Yuletide; and most like I shall, unless I get a bullet through my head from those rascally Dutchmen. And now, let me drink to your health, Mistress Amphyllis; and drink to brighter days, when you will be the star of some happy man's life."

Amphyllis blushed, and turned away her head.

"I have never seen your like, fair Amphyllis. I have travelled far and wide, though I am scarce twenty," said the young man; "for my good father has a notion that it is better to send the fledglings early from the nest. I was all afloat at Bordeaux

afore I was fifteen ; there I lived with an apothecary, and my stiff English tongue had to learn and talk French, because nobody understood me else. My good father wrote to me every month, and kept me well up to the mark. I preserve his letters, and you shall read them one day."

Tom Browne talked thus, possibly to prolong the time with Amphyllis, and possibly for the delight of gazing into her face, watching the varied expressions as he went on.

They were both young ; so young, that in these days we should call them almost children ; and the old story, old, yet ever fresh, was opening its first chapter. Tom Browne, with all the impetuous fervour of his nature, was every moment falling deeper in love with Amphyllis ; and she, who had lived her little life in the shadows, surrounded by sickness and death, felt her heart beating with a new and all untried sense of happiness—as a bird wakes in the springtime to the sweet influence of the sunshine.

Tom Browne stayed long, finding it impossible to tear himself away from the little dark wainscotted room which Amphyllis made a palace in his eyes.

Will he ever forget her ? as when at last the gathering twilight warned her that Bridget was all this time

waiting to complete her household tasks, she started as from a happy dream, saying :

"I must wish you good-evening, sir ; for my cousin is alone with my father, and I am, methinks, careless and unkind to tarry so long chattering."

"So long !" exclaimed Tom—"so long ! the hours have flown to me. Well-a-day, and I must go now ; may I take the promise that you will visit us to-morrow ? You shall have a coach sent to convey you, though not Mr. Howard's ; and there will be no festivities at our poor house, like those at the palace ! The coach will be here at ten of the clock, and you will come, fair Mistress Amphyllis ?"

How could she say *no* ? It was like opening the door to the caged bird, and bidding it not leave its prison.

"If Joan, our servant maid, returneth to-night, I am perhaps free ; unless, indeed, my father has a fit of raving. Then I must not leave Bridget."

And as she spoke there was the sound of heavy footsteps in the garden ; and cloaked and hooded, with a large basket on her arm, a tall woman came to the door.

"It is Joan," Amphyllis exclaimed ; "it is Joan returned from Yarmouth. Now, I think——" but what she thought was lost in the sharp knocking at

the front door, which was loud enough to bring Bridget from the room above to the top of the stairs.

"Hush, then!—hush! he sleeps, and that will awaken him. Amphyllis, at least you can unlatch the door."

"Yes, Bridget," Amphyllis said; and very soon the door was opened, and Joan crossed the threshold into the hall, robed in a black cloak and hood, and Amphyllis said:

"Is your sister dead, then?"

"Dead—yes, dead; and I never to stop to the burying. It is to be a fine burying, I warrant; but there, the funeral cake would have choked me if I had left the mistress and you a day longer with yon raving madman."

"My father is quieter, dear Joan," said Amphyllis. "The great physician has seen him, Dr. Thomas Browne, and his physic has worked wonders."

"Aye, aye, it won't last," said Joan, shaking her head. "It's only for the hour. Didst ever hear of one bewitched coming round? No, no. Yarmouth is all agog, I tell you, as to the trial of Amy Duny and Rose Cullender afore Sir Matthew Hale at Bury St. Edmunds. It was enough to scare the wits of any one to hear the talk in Yarmouth

of their evil doings. But they'll get their deserts; only hanging is too good for the likes of them. I'd have 'em burned and roasted an' I had my way."

In her vehemence against the witches, Joan had raised her voice to a high pitch, tumbling her words one over the other, as is the fashion of the east country folk to this day.

And now Joan caught sight of Tom Browne's figure in the gloaming.

"And who is that young gallant, eh! Mistress Amphyllis?"

"It is the great Doctor's son, Master Browne," said Amphyllis. "I will hasten upstairs, for I hear Bridget's voice calling, and wish you good-even, Master Browne."

"To-morrow at ten," he said; "it is a promise, Mistress Amphyllis."

But Amphyllis had disappeared up the stairs, leaving Tom Browne and Joan in the hall.

"A promise, eh! Well, there's many a promise made only to be broken like the crust of a pasty. She's a sweet flower, bless her heart," said Joan, "and I'm not ill-pleased she should have a holiday; for it's a dulsome life here, what with Master Andrew's preaching at her, pretty creature, and her father raving at her; and yet

both of 'em ready to worship the ground she walks on. Master Andrew may think I'm as blind as a mole; but I have my senses, praised be God, and I see sharp enough what he is hiding under his rough manner to the child. It's the way of some folks to hide love under a rough cloak and turn it to the one they worship. But there's cracks and rents in it at times, and then out comes the love, and no mistake."

As Joan gabbled on, Thomas Browne became more and more interested. This indeed was a new light to him. That solemn-faced, though handsome man of thirty in love with his "fair angel," his beautiful vision! He laughed at the very notion; but it made him uneasy, nevertheless. Beauty had loved the Beast, and had not one of the Norwich fair ones lately married of her own choice a certain Doctor Dee, twice her age? Well, he would make hay while the sun shone, and win the beautiful Amphyllis for his own.

Full of bright visions, he was departing gaily down the road, when he came upon Andrew returning from Thorpe, where he had been holding a service, and had resisted the invitation of one of the "chosen ones" to remain under her roof as a guest that night.

Something impelled him to return, he could hardly have said why, but he was fidgety and anxious to get back to the cottage.

Now, as he came shoulder to shoulder with Tom Browne, he thought he divined the reason.

"It was a leading," he said to himself. "The lamb is in danger of the roaring lion. It is for me to rescue her, like David of old."

"Your servant, Master Whitelock," said Tom gaily. "It's calmer weather than when we met last. How long is yon poor elm to lie across the road on its beam ends?"

"I cannot say," said Andrew coldly. "The officers of His Majesty's highway are responsible. My care is for souls, not for poor perishing bodies."

Tom laughed.

"Well, one must have a care, or necks will be broke by less agile folk than you or I." And doffing his cap again, Tom made a run, and taking the fallen tree at a single swift bound, was out of sight before Andrew could prepare a rejoinder, as to perils of souls like Tom Browne's being far greater than perils of broken necks or backs.

It was in a very disturbed state of mind that Andrew Whitelock reached the cottage. Joan, who had divested herself of her mourning cloak by this time and begun cleaning operations in the low wide kitchen, heard his well-known tap at the door and hastened to admit him. Joan had the secret

liking for Andrew, which takes root and grows steadily in the hearts of faithful servants, for those whom they have known and nursed in childhood. Bitterly had Joan lamented the great gulf which had been set between her late master and his only son. She had always hoped it would be bridged over, and many a time she had tried to make peace, though all in vain. The late master of the cottage had been a most staunch royalist and churchman. That anyone calling himself by his name, should declare that the murder of that saint and martyr Charles was a good, nay, holy deed, and blessed by God, seemed to him blasphemy—the unforgiven and unforgivable sin as far as he, Matthew Whitelock, was concerned. Then when the son whom he had seen educated with pride at Cambridge and destined for a living in the church, not only declared himself an enemy to the king, but an enemy to that very church, joined the rabble crew which desecrated the cathedral first, and many other of the Norwich churches, affected a slow solemnity of speech, cut off his chestnut curls and wore the coarse black garb and stiff bands of the Puritan minister, Matthew Whitelock's furious indignation knew no bounds. It cooled in time, as all enthusiasm must cool, for no temperature can keep at boiling heat; but a cold sarcastic condition followed. He forbade his only

son his house, and pronounced something very like a curse upon him.

We know a little—alas! too much—of bitterness born of religious differences in our own day. But we can but faintly realize what the fervour of religious zeal was in the time of the Great Rebellion. Men's hearts were stirred to their deeps. The destroyers of Church and King, and of law and order, in the name of liberty, were not more fanatical than the Royalists and Church-loving party were on their side.

Their king, from the moment of his death, became a saint in their eyes, and their church, which before they might have but lightly esteemed, became to them the bulwark and defence of all truth. Now-a-days men have a thousand daily interests which take their place alongside of religious ones, and in most cases supersede them. But in the seventeenth century it was not so. The enthusiasm of the great majority of the people centred in matters pertaining to faith. Here and there, it is true, might be found an Evelyn devoting himself to his botanical researches, his flowers, and his garden; a Sir Thomas Browne, concentrating his thoughts on some strange discovery in anatomy, or physiology, or chemistry—which was scarcely then much

more than alchemy — living apart from the strife of parties, though decided enough in his principles when need arose. The gay and the frivolous have been found in all ages, and there were the votaries of pleasure, whose grand concern was the curling of love-locks, the set of their ruffles, and the fall of their feathers. But the great majority of the English people of that time found their deepest concern lay in the burning question of the form of government and the form of worship ; and thus the enthusiast found in them the centre of his enthusiasm, from which nothing more trivial around him could divert him from devoting himself, body and soul.

Slow communication had something to do with the slow understanding of, and sympathy with, passing events.

Local interest was supreme in the cities and towns of England, and while the majority of the inhabitants of Norwich, Yarmouth, and Bury St. Edmunds knew or cared little about the Dutch war, or the threatened spread of the plague in London, they were absorbed in the religious question which the trial of Amy Duny and Rose Cullender implied.

For the work of the devil, and the black art,

by which he gained his votaries, was, to the Puritan mind, even more abhorrent than to that of the English Churchman or Roman Catholic. The Puritan hunted witchcraft to the death, and believed it to be a blow to the kingdom of the Prince of Darkness when an unhappy woman was arraigned, condemned, and forced, as so often happened, into a belief in her own witchcraft, and done to death by drowning, hanging, or fire.

"Aye, well a-day, Master Andrew," was Joan's greeting. "I'm back, you see. My poor sister is dead. I couldn't find the heart to stay and see her decently buried, while I knew I was wanted here. And sure enough I've found a peck of dust and dirt, enow to choke me. Have you supped, Master Andrew?"

But Andrew seemed peculiarly abstracted and strange in his manner.

"Have you had any guest here?" pointing to the silver salver and large tankard on the table.

"Aye, the Doctor's son; he was leaving just as I was a-coming in. A pretty fellow, and well spoken, he is."

"What brought him here?"

"Nay, Master Andrew, how can I tell? Mayhap to look after the sick man, and give him a potion."

Andrew made a gesture of impatience and dissent from such a proposition.

"Yon foolish boy is a sailor, as I believe. What can he know of drugs? It is the eldest son, Edward, who is to follow his father's art. Look here, Joan, if that fellow comes again, forbid him entrance."

Joan shook her head.

"Might as lief bid the bees not come to the honey in the lavender bush," she said, with a half smile. "I am not the one to chase the bees off, and I might get a sting for my pains. There now, I'll put on a posset, and spice it well, and there's a bit of the pasty left I made afore I went away. I'll make it ready for you, Master Andrew."

"First I would gather the family for worship—summon Amphyllis and my sister."

"It's not for them to leave the upper chamber together. One always keeps watch."

"Then I will go there for worship," said Andrew. "And you follow me, good Joan."

It was not the first time that Andrew had gone to the sick man's chamber to preach and pray. It was nearly dark now, and as he entered the room he could see clearly defined against the window facing west the graceful outline of his cousin's form.

She was lost in pleasant dreams, which were sweet to her as to many maidens of seventeen.

The evening star was shining globe-like in the western heaven, through the topmost boughs of the poplars by the mill. The soft, pure radiance seemed in harmony with the light within her, the light of awakening love ! There was not a cloud in the opal depths where the sun had left a tender flush of rose colour, and Venus now reigned as a queen. If Amphyllis had been asked why she felt so happy she could not have told out the story in words. That time might come ; but now it was but the sense of having found the elixir of life, which is so nameless and so sweet to young hearts.

Bridget, tired with the household work, which had fallen to her share during the four days of Joan's absence at Yarmouth, was dozing in a chair with her head against the wall, while the patient still slept quietly, and Amphyllis thought he would do well now.

The silence was broken by Andrew's voice—the darkness was of no consequence to him, he could preach and pray without candle or lamp, for he wanted no book.

"Let us worship God," he said in his low sonorous voice, the educated voice which came to him from his Cambridge training, as well as from his gentle birth.

If at times he affected the drawl and twang of the upstart Puritan preacher, it was but affectation. His real voice gradually overcame the assumed one, and was pleasant instead of harsh to the ear.

Amphyllis started, and Bridget stood erect as Andrew repeated in slow, distinct tones, one of the Psalms which was in favour with his people.

“Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered : let them also that hate Him flee before Him. Like as the smoke vanisheth, so shalt Thou drive them away : and like as wax melteth at the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.’” Desperate was the emphasis Andrew laid upon some of the words, and I fear he was secretly applying them to the merry sailor who had so lately left the house.

Then followed the prayer, which Andrew delivered standing. It was a strange mingling of entreaty and expostulation ; scarcely so much beseeching for grace as confessing need, and striving with God to supply it.

The whole scene was, however, solemn. The white cover of the sick man’s bed gleamed out of the shadows, and a moonbeam striking across the lattice window caught the heavy lock of hair which lay upon Amphyllis’s shoulder and made it shine like gold. Andrew’s dark figure as he stood with

uplifted hand, and wrestled, as it were, with God, formed in itself a striking picture. The worship lasted a shorter time than usual, and when it ceased, Joan, who had stood at the threshold of the chamber, departed to see to the posset she had set on the hob, while Bridget struck a light with a flint, and succeeded after two attempts to kindle the small oil lamp.

"How fares it with him to-day?" Andrew asked.

"He is quiet, and his face is a trifle less wan and pinched," said Bridget, shading the lamp carefully. "The remains of the draught the Doctor left, was administered at four o'clock, and he has been peaceful since. I did not count on your return this night, Andrew."

"The hand of the Lord guided me hither," said Andrew. "Was there not a cause?"

Amphyllis had managed to slip out of the room in answer to Joan's summons.

"The supper is ready," she said; "taste this posset, Mistress Amphyllis."

Amphyllis took a prolonged draught from the large cup, and said: "Now a spiced cake, Joan, and then to bed. It is Bridget's turn to watch till four, and then I take mine."

"No, no; sleep sound and long, my pretty one,"

said Joan, "or you will have white roses instead of pink ones for the young gallant to-morrow. I'll watch, and if there is need awaken you."

Amphyllis was about to speak when she saw Andrew in the doorway.

"Amphyllis, will you not sit down to the board with me, nor take your meal standing?"

"Nay, I want no meal," she said. "Good-night, Joan; thanks for the posset. Such a good posset, Andrew! I've left you a few drops."

"There's more in the pan," Joan said, going to the hearth and stirring the concoction with a long iron ladle; "there's no stint."

"Amphyllis, I would fain speak with you in the parlour; grant me a few moments."

"No, not to-night. It is time for all folks to seek their pillow. Good-night, Andrew;" and she glided up to him, made a low curtsy, and was departing, when he suddenly took her hand.

"I must speak with you, Amphyllis; it is the Lord's will. He sent me home for this reason. Nay, you *shall* hear me—it is a matter on which I will not be gainsaid."

"Speak on then," she said, in mocking defiance; "only, prythee, be short, for I am yawning as it is:" and she made a feint of a tremendous gape, as the east

country people term it, and put her hand to cover her mouth, and the laughter into which the gape resolved. "I'll hearken, see ! till your clock gives warning for nine," pointing to the great round face of the clock, where the long hand was upon the X, and the short one at IX. "Nine minutes—sure that's enow for your sermon. Now begin."

"Not here; we must be alone, Amphyllis," he said glancing at Joan.

"Here or nowhere," was the answer; "you are losing time, Andrew; see, only eight minutes left you !"

Andrew's face really showed so much concern that Joan, murmuring something about Mistress Bridget, stumped upstairs and left the field clear.

"Now then, good Andrew," said the girl, "begin your preachment."

"Amphyllis, child, this is no jesting matter; that gay young man has been here alone with thee this afternoon. It means mischief for thee; and shall I see danger and not try to rescue thee? What was his mission?"

"To bear me an invitation from his mother, the Mistress Dorothy Browne, to be their guest at a supper to-night. Instead, I am drinking posset and eating cake here with thee;" and she broke another

cake in half, and nibbled it, laughing as she stood before him. "I did not go to-night because I cared not to leave Bridget and my father without Joan. But Joan is come back, and to-morrow, ah! to-morrow, I shall go to the city and forget my troubles for a space, if my poor father rests quiet that is."

"You will *not* go, Amphyllis; you shall not."

"And, prythee, why?" she asked.

"Because I forbid it; because I see in this following of the gay, idle fellow, sorrow for thee and pain for—"

"Idle and gay!" she interrupted, "idle and gay, forsooth! It is well that some folks should smile and look glad, for there's enow of long sour faces about in these days, I warrant. No, not a word more, Andrew; the clock has warned for nine, and I am off. Good-night, good Andrew, for I think you are good, though so very very solemn, and dull, and—good-night."

Then in a moment she had evaded his detaining hand, and danced off with her light step to her chamber upstairs.



IN THE PHYSICIAN'S HOME.

ALL things looked promising for Amphyllis the next morning ; her father had awoke in his right mind, and for the time the frenzy was past.

"And I may go with an easy mind, dear Bridget?" Amphyllis asked; "you can spare me?"

"Yes, child, as far as I know. I say yes; but Andrew is so greatly averse to it."

"Andrew!" exclaimed Amphyllis, impatiently, "as if I cared for Andrew."

"He cares for thee," Bridget said sadly; "he cares for thy welfare and best good; be not hard upon him."

"I do not desire to be hard on anyone," said Amphyllis. "It is he that is harsh on me, and—— Tell me, Bridget, has our Father in Heaven made us young, and given us good things, only that we may go mourning all our days, grudging happiness to the young—yes, calling it a sin?"

"Pleasure is not happiness, dear child, and methinks happiness comes to us all unawares. It comes out of trouble and sorrow; the thorn pricks us sore, and when we bear the prick and are patient, lo! if we pluck it out, it blossoms a rose."

"Well a-day," sighed Amphyllis. "I've had many a sore prick, and no roses have come out of 'em. I have had scant joy, dear Bridget, as you know—penury, illness, and death, these have been mine to see, if not to endure."

"I know it, dear child—I know it; but see here, there is a coach at the gate. Whither is Joan gone? A real grand coach! Nay, it can't pass betwixt the gates."

Bridget and Amphyllis were standing together at the window which lighted the top of the stairs, and commanded a view of the garden.

"See, a lady steppeth out—and another. Amphyllis, what can it mean?"

"It is Mistress Browne and Mary—Moll as they have it;—they are come for me, Bridget, and I have not donned all my best clothes. Will they tarry?—ah! will they tarry for me?"

Mistress Browne and her young daughter were at the door by this time, and inquiring of

Joan, who had gone to open it, whether Mistress Amphyllis Windham lodged there?

And before Joan could answer, Amphyllis tripped downstairs, and blushing and smiling, showed the way into the parlour.

It seemed that Mistress Dorothy Browne had shown sound discretion in coming herself to fetch the little maiden, who had taken her sailor boy's heart by storm. She would not let him rush, as he was minded, himself to carry off his prize, but with true maternal instinct, read the earnestness of his desire in his lustrous eyes, and proposed that she and Moll should drive in the coach and bring her back with them.

After the first greetings, Mistress Browne said, "And I would fain keep you till to-morrow, Mistress Amphyllis, for methinks the Doctor will have returned from St. Edmunds Bury by then, and you can be conveyed back by him. How fares it with your father?"

"He is much mended—like himself almost to-day. I pray you give me leave—while you are seated—to inquire of my cousin Bridget, if I may have so great a pleasure as you are so good, madam, to make for me."

"Run then, and, if it please you, hasten, for my

men do not care to keep their horses waiting too long."

Amphyllis was gone in a moment, radiant with joy.

"Bridget! Bridget! may I stay at Dr. Browne's the night, and return to-morrow? Ah! I am too self-seeking. Nay, I will not go."

For Bridget's face was very sad. She was a middle-aged woman, whose previous life, like Amphyllis's, had been passed in the shadows; but, unlike her beautiful little cousin, there was no youthful hope in her, and hence no earthly future. She was one of those quiet, and, as we say now, common-place women, whose duties are narrowed by the walls of home, and whose daily and simple acts of self-forgetting pass unnoticed and uncommended.

If there had been a romance in the story of her life, it had been dead for many years. She fulfilled her mission of peacemaker in the lifetime of her impetuous, hot-headed old Royalist father, and had stood between him and his firstborn son many a time, as an angel of peace. Joan knew her worth, and valued her; but the outside world took but scanty heed of her; and Andrew, having already, as I have said, taken

possession of the house at his father's death, treated Bridget with but little consideration, and looked upon her as one outside the fold, who had cast in her lot with the accusers of the brethren.

Amphyllis, as she threw her arms round Bridget, repeated, "I will not go, and *you* desire me to stay."

And now the sick man's voice was heard feebly calling—

"Amphyllis, what do I hear about the Doctor?"

"The Doctor's lady has arrived to carry me in her coach to visit her, but——"

"Go, go, child; you will need friends. Go, it is my desire."

"Yes, Amphyllis, go," Bridget said.

Away went Amphyllis to her little chamber, on the story above the one where her father lay. She had put on her best stockings and buckled shoes, when she rose that morning, and her cherry-coloured skirt. She had, therefore, only to tie on her apron, with its wide lace to match the ruffles on her black bodice, over which she arranged folds of snowy muslin. Her hair was gathered up to-day, except for the love-locks which lay one on either side of her breast, upon the kerchief, and shone like gold. Great was Amphyllis's desire for a pair of long loose gloves, and

she had only lately been able to procure them from one of the pedlars who still hawked their wares in the outskirts of great cities like Norwich, having their stores within the city walls from which the packs were supplied.

Over all Amphyllis wore a cloak with a hood, tied with cherry-coloured ribbon, and in an incredibly short time she was standing by her father's bed ready for her day's delight.

"Dear father, good-bye!"

He turned his large weary eyes on her, with a pathetic look of pride.

"So fair," he said. "So like thy mother; pray God thy fate may be a happier one than hers. God speed you."

Then in a low whisper, which she bent her head to catch—

"Amphyllis, I said the Lord's Prayer through and through, when I awoke—that is good; tell the Doctor. God be with thee, child."

With another gentle kiss upon her father's forehead, Amphyllis was gone.

As soon as Amphyllis was fairly off, riding in the Doctor's coach, the buoyancy of her nature asserted itself, and she forgot her past troubles in present happiness. Molly, too, seemed scarcely less delighted

than her new friend ; and Mistress Browne watched the sparkling faces opposite her with a grave maternal interest.

“She is fair enow,” she thought. “So fair that I wonder not my boy was enthralled by her. But what is the inner woman ? is the heart beating under that pretty kerchief true and tender ? Methinks, the face is frank and sweet, and may be taken as an index of the mind ; though favour is sometimes deceitful, and beauty vain. Well-a-day, if my sailor boy gives his whole heart, I would fain he had a good return, and no scant measure doled out. I know not what my husband will say : but to him that hath an eye for beauty, methinks this child will not come amiss.”

While Mistress Browne was thus meditating upon Amphyllis, she was enjoying the dignity of her position, for Amphyllis’s rides in coaches had been few and far between. Even the thought of so soon seeing Master Tom Browne could not prevent her sense of satisfaction as they made slow progress down St. Giles Street, and descending Gaol Hill, turned into the Market Place. It was not market-day, but there was plenty of life stirring, and a news-man was bawling out the events of a week ago, which were listened to with eager curiosity by a gaping crowd. In another part of the great square, a Cheap Jack was offering

his wares, and the bells of St. Peter's Mancroft were ringing joyously above his head, making a sort of running commentary on his loud metallic cry—

“Look ye!—look ye! A braver tin kettle never boiled your broth. Hark ye! what sound!” and the Cheap Jack beat a tattoo on the kettle, as the bells rang out again after a pause. Then a knot of gay ribbons was waved aloft, and Amphyllis was so eagerly watching them as they fluttered in the air, that the coach had stopped at the physician's mansion before she was aware of it, and there with the door thrown open to receive her, stood Tom, looking the picture of youthful vigour, his fine face aglow with happiness, as he said—

“Welcome to our poor house, my fair lady.” He held the slight figure in his arms for a brief moment, before depositing Amphyllis in the hall, where old Jonas was standing, with a somewhat cynical expression on his crumpled-up face.

“Any messages, Jonas?” his mistress inquired.

“Aye—a score or more.”

“No news of your master?”

“None, worse luck. There be them who want him more than the witches, I warrant, poor creatures.”

“Your master knows best, Jonas. We dine at one of the clock, and I would fain hope he will be here

anon. He would leave Bury early, as he did not arrive last night."

Meantime a cluster of young heads was seen—some peeping through the open work of the gallery which ran round the hall, some just above the thick baluster, with its delicately-carved scroll. The little Brownes were not without the curiosity of their age, and Anne's grave rebuke not to stand and stare at a stranger was not much heeded.

Mistress Anne hurriedly tripped down the wide stairs, and greeted Amphyllis with, "Welcome, Mistress Windham! Molly will take you to our chamber, where you can lay aside your cloak and hood."

"Nay now, Nancy, I am to conduct Mistress Windham to the close, and down to Pull's Ferry. It is a fair day. Why keep her mewed up in the house?"

"You forget, Tom," said Nancy, in the elder-sisterly tone of reproof, "that most like Mistress Windham is wearied, and—"

"Oh, no, no. I am not weary," Amphyllis exclaimed. "I should like to see the city, and to walk in the close, and I would like to see all over this grand house," she said simply. "T'other night I could make out but little when I was so sore frightened

about my father. Has not the Doctor some very rare and curious things—beasts, and birds, and all manner of creatures? Mistress Howse at the Mill has told me many folk come from far and near to see the gardens and the rare plants.”

“Well-a-day, there is no such mighty hurry, Tom. Let Mistress Windham take some refreshment,” said his mother. “Run, Moll, and order them to send some rolls and comfits from the buttery, and let Mistress Windham rest awhile. It is scarce eleven o’clock.”

Amphyllis soon found herself the centre of interest to Molly and to her sailor brother. They conducted her through the spacious rooms and round the gallery above, from which most of the bedchambers opened. A door at the end of the corridor was pushed roughly back by Tom, and Molly exclaimed :

“Nay, Tom, that is a room where father keeps many matters he would not let us see.”

But Tom went on impetuously, and said :

“Dead cats and bones, and such like; nothing more fearsome. We will pass through, at any rate, and descend by the stone staircase to the garden.”

But Amphyllis screamed, “There is a skeleton’s head—oh! what a dreadful creature! I dare not pass it.”

But Tom drew her hand within his arm, and said :

"Nay, fear not dead men's bones by broad daylight. Ah, Ned!"

Edward Browne was seated at the further end of the room, at a board roughly hewn, on which he had stretched a frog for dissection. So earnest was he in his work that he had not heard the others enter, and it was Amphyllis's little cry of terror that made him look up.

"Nay, Tom; why bring such a dainty creature here? My father does not suffer the children to enter."

"So I told Tom; but he will have his way always," said Molly. Tom looked very penitent, but he pressed Amphyllis's little hand in his, and said, "Look out of this window, there are pleasant sights thence, and forget the rest."

The window was a wide bay, with thick stone mullions; below was the garden, which was even then famous far beyond Norwich.

It was skirted by walls, it is true, and the roofs of the houses in the Haymarket were visible; but the Castle, with its green slopes crowned by the heavy mass of masonry, made a fine background to the turf terraces and gravel paths and beds, which were so skilfully laid out that an idea of space was given, and it was difficult to believe that the actual extent was so circumscribed. Spring flowers were peeping

up, and the bushes and shrubs putting forth their emerald buds. The March sunshine was lying upon the grass, and everything seemed bursting into the new-born life of spring.

Amphyllis kept her head steadily turned from the board, and Edward, taking a large key from a drawer in a high bureau, unlocked the small, low door which opened on a narrow, spiral staircase.

"This is my father's private way to the garden. He steps down there unperceived, and attends to the wants of his plants and rare birds. Tom will show you the plant of black hellebore, which is well in flower, and an almond tree showing the fairest pink blossoms."

"Oh," said Tom, "I have seen the almond trees in France like one pink sheet of blossom, and the orange trees all laden with their fruit and flowers."

"Ah, well we know what a travelled man you are," said the elder brother; "but conduct Mistress Amphyllis to the garden, Molly, nor bring a young gentlewoman hither again without notice; for I am in sad disorder to receive her, for which I crave pardon."

"Oh!" said Amphyllis, giving one parting look back at the long room, either side of which was lined from floor to ceiling with shelves and cases, and phials, in which gruesome creatures were floating in

spirits. "Ah! it must be dreadful to be a doctor if he has to live amongst such horrors."

"These are no horrors to Ned and my father," Molly said. "You do not understand how to seek after truth; there must needs be the due weighing and sifting of all things in this natural world. There is nothing without significance, nothing that God has made, which has not some place in the great plan by which He would teach us how to live in this world; and," she added in a lower voice, "how to live for the next."

They were at the bottom of the stairs as she spoke, and Tom laughing gaily, said:

"Moll must always be grave on occasion, Mistress Amphyllis. She has more of my father's spirit in her than any of us. She will dip and dive for new things as yon duck in that bit of water for a fresh spawn."

"It may be well while it lasts to jest about all things, Tom; but there must come a time when graver matters will be thought of, whether we will or no. My father will show you, I doubt not, Amphyllis, his rare collection of birds' eggs: they are so beautiful; but that cabinet he keeps ever locked and safe from harm."

And now, the two girls explored the grounds and gardens, and Amphyllis's cheeks were like roses when the hour for the mid-day dinner arrived, and she sat

down to the hospitable board in the spacious dining hall, where so many distinguished people were often gathered. The walls of this room were also wainscotted, and several good paintings hung on the panels. This hall was lighted principally from above, and by two high windows, from which could be seen only the tops of the trees traced against the blue sky.

In large houses like the great physician's, the mid-day meal was seldom served without the presence of some who were not members of the household.

There were several gentlemen present to-day, and Amphyllis, for the first time, in her short life, listened to the conversation of those who had lived and moved in the great world, of which she knew nothing, except by hearsay.

The Doctor's absence at Bury was mentioned, and Mistress Browne inquired several times of the servants, in the course of the long-drawn-out meal, whether their master had returned. She was evidently anxious, and when at last Moll exclaimed :

"I hear father's footsteps," her face lighted with satisfaction.

"May I run to him, mother?" Moll said, rising.

"Nay, Moll, do not be so busy," said her sister Elizabeth.

"Prythee, let me go, mother, and ask if father will have any refreshment." Mistress Browne nodded her head by way of assent, and Moll disappeared.

Meanwhile Amphyllis was enjoying the conversation of one of the young men who was present, a cousin of the Browne family, named Bendish. Hal Bendish was a young gallant of the type then in the highest favour. He was small and insignificant in person, but made up for this, by an elaborate costume, scented love-locks, and costly lace ruffles.

He had also a knack of saying pretty things to women, by which he hoped to win favour, nor, indeed, did he hope in vain.

Dr. Thomas Browne always spoke of him as "empty pated Hal Bendish," and discouraged his too frequent appearance in his family. That is to say, his greeting was never as cordial and hearty as it was to some of the young men who frequented his house.

The Doctor held fast to the old maxim, "That if a man did not work, neither should he eat," and having pushed on his young sons to exert themselves in their professions, he had but little patience with Master Hal Bendish, who was content to hang about Norwich dependent on his mother, and spending a large part of her income in "gauds and finery."

But to Amphyllis Windham, who had been, until

the last week, dependent for society upon the inhabitants of Cringleford, and who had only heard stories of the grand doings in the Duke's palace, which seemed to her like a fairy land, where she could never hope to set her foot, there was a great charm in Master Hal's lively chatter.

"And if you live in Norwich," this young man was saying to Amphyllis, "how is it that you have never been at the Palace? For had you been present at any of the festivities last winter, I, for one, must have discerned you. The beauty of my lady Ogle's daughter, of Mistress Houghton, and Mistress Shadwell, would have been eclipsed, I warrant, had you been in that gay throng. I see Master Edward yonder, pricking up his ears as the last name falls from my lips. Mistress Shadwell is his sun, and all are lesser lights when compared with her, in his eyes. Say, now, fair lady, that you will not be so cruel as to refuse to appear at the next dance at the Palace and give me hope of your hand for the new Court minuet."

"Alas ! sir," said Amphyllis, "I cannot dance a Court minuet. Nor is it much odds, for I shall never enter the Palace."

"And prythee, why not ? Mistress Browne will see to it, and if not, my mother, her kinswoman, will take you under her wing, and be proud to do it."

Amphyllis dropped her eyes under the languishing glance of her new admirer, and was conscious that Tom's face opposite her showed signs of displeasure.

She tossed her head with a little coquettish air and said :

"I would love to dance, and to hear sweet music, and to come to the Duke's palace ; but I fear me there are no such pleasant things in store for me."

"I'll warrant there will be pleasanter when you shine as a star at Court, and show the London world what beauties lie hid in Norfolk."

All this flattery was very fascinating to poor little Amphyllis. She forgot the cottage, and Bridget, and her sick father for the time, as she listened to stories of the high life, about the Court, seasoned with a flavour of which she did not take the full meaning. But now the party broke up, and Tom came round to Amphyllis's side.

"If it still finds favour in your eyes, we will explore the city a little: daylight does not last too long at this season. Come Bess, and Nancy, and Ned, will you join company?"

Master Hal Bendish, who had thrown himself into a graceful attitude on one of the benches, toying with his love-lock and smoothing his lace ruffles by turns, now said :

"Will you not make me one of this party, Tom?"

"No, I will not," said Tom bluntly. "You are not shod in shoes fit to walk the street. You are too fine by half to follow a sailor like me through the Marsfield to the Close. You had as lief stay here and listen to Mr. de Veau playing on the guitar."

"There will be supper at seven of the clock this evening, and we will dance in the Hall," Mistress Browne now said, as she turned away from her son Ned, who had evidently been suggesting to her to issue the invitations for the evening. "I shall be glad to meet you all again, gentlemen, at that hour, and you may be pleased to bring a friend or two with you. I leave my son Ned to invite some fair ladies." And then Mistress Browne left the dining-room and went to seek her husband.

She found him in his library, Moll seated on a low stool at his feet, her hands clasped on his knee.

"Well-a-day, dear husband," Mistress Browne said. "Art thou so very weary?"

The Doctor stretched out one of his arms and putting it round his wife, drew her close to him, and kissed her affectionately.

"Aye, I am tired enow," he said; "but Moll has brought me the slight repast I needed, and now I must be off to answer some dozen calls to the sick.

Jonas has brought me a goodly number of summonses."

And now Tom's hasty entrance made Moll start to her feet.

"Do you call this good manners, Moll, to leave a guest unheeded? Mistress Amphyllis waits for you to walk with her to——"

"And do you call it good manners, sir," said his father, "to burst into a room like a bomb-shell, with never 'by your leave,' or 'with your leave'?"

"I crave pardon, sir," said Tom instantly; "but there are signs of squalls, and I am a bit out of my reckoning. But I crave pardon," he repeated, dropping on one knee, and taking his father's hand and kissing it.

"Ah! honest Tom," was the quick reply. "I grant the pardon," and then putting his hand on the chestnut curls fondly, he said: "Has the fair Amphyllis turned thy curly pate? Away then, Moll, at thy brother's bidding, and leave thy mother and me alone."

When the brother and sister were gone, Mistress Browne took Moll's low seat and, looking up into her husband's face, said:

"Has thy errand to Bury St. Edmunds prospered, dear husband?"

"Prospered, sweetheart? Nay; I can scarce tell whether or no I ought to say prospered. The poor wretches are condemned to die, and the verdict was swayed by my words, so they say. But we must not talk more of the matter, especially in Moll's presence. She is all a-fire about it, and searches me with many questions of 'the why,' and 'the how,' and 'the wherefore,'—questions I would fain answer, God knoweth, but which remain amongst the dark riddles that as yet are to remain unsolved. It seems to me, sweetheart, that we are as men groping in the dark towards a ray of light, which may wax brighter and brighter, and lead us out into a fair temple where visions of glory await us. Not yet—not yet: we are not ready, it may be. But if that glimmer of light be the true light, it *must* lead us to the full fountain at last in the coming time."

"The poor old witches! They may deserve their fate—but yet—," and Mistress Browne sighed, for her womanly instinct asserted itself; "but yet, I would fain wish that any word but thine, had helped to sign their death warrant."

"And so would I, dear wife, so would I; but being sworn to say what I believed to be true, how could I draw back or swear falsely?"

"No; but so full of benevolence as thou art, dear

husband ; so full of wit and wisdom ; the friend of the sick and the poor ; the author of a world-famed book ; I would fain hope this matter of witchcraft, on which men's minds are now divided, may pass out of memory, when all thy good and noble deeds remain."

"Thou must not puff me up with vain glory, Dorothy," the Doctor said. "Ah, dear heart," he continued, "there are moments when I am brought very low ; for this little life soon passeth like a shadow, and the dust of the centuries blots out the very names of thousands who have done more for truth than ever I have done. Verily their memorials perish with them."

A look of deep sadness came over that noble face, and was as quickly dispelled, as he roused himself from his depression, and said, "And how fares it with the sick man at Cringleford?"

"He is quieter, and come to his full senses. Tom—honest Tom—has been smitten by one of Cupid's shafts, and can only live in Amphyllis's presence. He would fain have gone off, post-haste, this morning, and escorted her hither ; but I ordered the coach, and went myself with Moll, and brought her back, begging that she may abide one night under our roof."

"That was well done, as befitted a discreet mother," said the Doctor. "So Tom's head is turned?"

"Yes, and it may be his heart also. The maiden is very fair—so beautiful that the path of life is fraught with dangers for her, motherless as she is."

"Poor thing!" said the Doctor; "and wouldst thou be her mother, Dorothy?"

"Nay, I know not. This fancy of our Tom's may be blown away on his next voyage—a perilous one, I fear me, if the war rumours are correct."

"The air is thick with rumours of war and pestilence. The plague gathers force in London, and with the heat of summer I fear me it will go hard if it reaches not further than London. We might have hoped for better times for the nation since the restoration of our lawful king; but there is a loose morality in the court now, unless I am much mistaken. As to honest Tom, a pure love for a pure maiden is the best shield a youth of twenty can bear about with him. So we will not hinder it, but wait and see from what quarter the wind blows."

"I have had several dropping in to dine this forenoon, and I have bid them to supper this evening, when what with Mr. De Veau's guitar and Mr. Shadwell's lute, methought we might let the young folks dance for a space. It will not displease you, dear husband?"

"Nay, nay. I would fain see the young happy,

and I may pick up a score more guests on my rounds. So see to the board, Dorothy, and have no lack of viands and sweet dishes, which are ever toothsome to the girls and boys. As to wine, there are some dozen bottles on the upper shelf of the cellar, of which Jonas has the key. And now I must away."

Mistress Browne took another kiss before she parted from her husband, and then went to carry out her domestic arrangements for the evening entertainments.



THE ERPINGHAM GATEWAY.

TOM BROWNE was well pleased to find the party consisted only of Molly and a younger brother of twelve, who attended the Norwich Grammar School, and was in high spirits in anticipation of the coming fair to be held on Maundy Thursday on the Marsfield and Tombland.

Robert was Moll's favourite brother, and his allegiance to her was unbounded. Her sisters Nancy and Bess were apt to look down on Moll as plain, and, somehow, rather "queer." They had a dim consciousness that Molly had a world of her own in which they had not much part. She would sit at her books for hours, and was happiest when in her father's library, quiet if he wished, and talking out her own thoughts if he encouraged her to do so. Bright and joyous as Bob was he liked to be quiet sometimes, and then when Moll read out something which puzzled him he would listen with sympathy if not with understanding; and though

he had no solution to offer of her problems, yet he could at least follow his sister through the mazes of her thoughts, and sum up everything with—

“ You know, Moll, it will all be made easy at last.”

It happened as the party passed under St. Ethelbert's gateway from Tombland, that the old gate-keeper, who was always in his box by the door of the gate-house, remarked to a friend from the Alms-house on Palace-plain :

“ There go the Doctor's childer ; wonder they have such luck, I do ; the Doctor has been to send two poor creturs to their death at Bury, so I hear say from his son who is hostler at the ‘ Maid's Head.’ ”

The words “ the Doctor's childer,” made Moll pause. Tom and Amphyllis were too much engrossed with each other to think of anything but themselves, and Tom had kept well ahead of his brother and sister to prevent interruption.

“ Come on, Moll,” Bob said ; but Moll, with a face kindling with emotion, turned and faced the old gate-keeper.

“ My father, Dr. Browne, has only done his duty ; sure he has saved lives enow in Norwich, and it is a shame that you should speak of him like that.”

“ The pretty child, hark to her ! ” said the old man, wheezing and laughing. “ Aye, aye, my chicken,

father is a grand gentleman we all know, and learned scholar, but he is mighty stiff in his own way, he is."

Molly did not know that the old gate-keeper owed her father a grudge for being sharp on him for some failure in duty. For the Close at Norwich then, as now, was securely locked at night, and the Doctor, being summoned to one of the clergy, had been kept waiting for an hour, making vain attempts to arouse the old man overpowered more by spirits than by sleep.

"Come, Moll, never mind what an old gaffer like that says, Tom and Mistress Windham are out of sight as it is."

Molly obeyed, but she began to go over the old ground with Bob, and her young and sensitive nature fastened on the terrible realities of death on this bright spring day, when the earth was awakening on all sides from its winter sleep.

"It seems so hard to leave the bright sunshine," she said. "It was sad enow when our little Sue died, but to see her in pain and then gently fall asleep was soothing to the heart. And Uncle Bendish too, he died in his bed in peace. But to be led out with a rope round the neck and strangled; ah! Bob, how is it possible that the dear Lord can allow it?"

"Well," said Bob, "if folks kill and do murder, why, they are best out of the way. And think of the thousands that have been run through, and that in the times not so long ago: why, even I can remember the talk of the great fights of Dunbar and Worcester. Don't bother your head about dying, Mary, it's as common a thing as life."

"Ah, Bob," said Moll, "that may be true, but a common thing is *the* thing for us when it happens to us alone. I would fain think and believe that death is only the gate of life, but sometimes I ask why all this dressing and feasting and dancing at the Palace—aye, even in our own house, and with a breath it may be all gone."

"Ah, well," said Bob, again returning to his old philosophy, "it will all come right, Moll, at last; and life is a pleasant thing for us."

"For *us*! yes," sighed Moll; "for *us*, but not for many; it's *that* which irks me, Bob."

Mary Browne had caught much of her father's spirit, and no one could look at her mobile expressive face when she was deeply moved without being struck with the resemblance to him, less in feature, for Mary was plain, but by the depth of feeling and emotion which lay in the hazel eye shaded by long lashes, and a little prominent and full lidded.

Master Tom was well pleased to get far in advance of his sister. He was falling every moment more deeply in love with Amphyllis. Though he was so joyous and light-hearted, there was in him a spring of tenderness which seemed to flow forth with irresistible power towards the beautiful maiden, who a week ago was unknown to him.

For all future time this spring afternoon would remain a sad and tender remembrance to Amphyllis Windham.

Tom led her by the back of the Cathedral to the great west door, where they passed into the nave, solemnized, they scarcely knew why. Tom had been silent for a few moments, but now he spoke.

Amphyllis, too, was solemnized by the grandeur of the building, where she stood, gazing up at the beautiful roof, and around to the mysterious choir, which lay so far beyond the outer court of the sanctuary.

A ray of western sunlight illumined her dainty figure, and seemed to linger like a glory round her head.

Her hood had fallen back, and the outline was traced by the golden hair, which caught the sunshine till it glowed like an aureole in the old figures of saints and angels in the quaint window above her.

Tom felt as if he dared not move or break the spell, and Amphyllis sighed out—

“It is wondrous beautiful!”

“You are wondrous beautiful,” was on his lips; but the compliment seemed to die unspoken. It was not the time or place for such words.

They moved on slowly, and passed through the choir to a side aisle, and then came out at the west door again, where the Erpingham Gateway rose before them, and the antique façade of the Grammar School was on their right.

This gateway had always an attraction for Tom Browne, for Sir Thomas Erpingham had been a brave soldier in that great battle of Agincourt, which, more than any other battle, moved the hearts of the English people with a sense of glorious triumph.

Although Tom Browne was a sailor, he had a soldier's heart within him, and, indeed, the sea-fights of the time were amply sufficient to satisfy the thirst for glory.

“See, then, those letters which are sculptured everywhere,” he said: “they bid us think of the noble Sir Thomas Erpingham. There he kneels aloft, as if in prayer, and everywhere the same letters, ‘Yenk.’”

* The word *Yenk*—“*think*”—answered to the “*have mynde*” or prayer for remembrance which appears on many brasses, and is placed on labels on the front of the Erpingham Gateway.

'Think on me' the word means. And yonder are the arms of his two sons, both named John, and



ERPINGHAM GATE.

still the same letters—'think,' 'Yenk.' And now see here, Mistress Amphyllis, I pray you to write

that word, 'Yenk,' in your heart when I am far away, for I love you with all my soul, and nought can ever change me. Say, Amphyllis, can you think on me as your true knight and true love, and wait for my return? Please God, I win honour in my next voyage in strange waters; please God, if I have to fight the enemies of my country, I will do it with a will. I may fall abroad, and be buried in the sea, and that's not a burial I dread; better far than to be eaten by worms in a damp grave."

Amphyllis, whose hand Tom had drawn within his arm, shuddered.

"Nay, nay, Master Tom, do not speak of such fearsome things."

"Well, then, sweet one, I will speak no more of dying, but of living for you. There is no rule or law in these things. The moment I saw you by the hearth in our library, last Monday night—so sad, so beautiful—I loved you. I never thought of any woman before; I can never think of any woman again. I love you, Amphyllis, with all my heart. Can you bide patiently for me, and, when I come home, be my wife?"

Amphyllis's heart fluttered like an imprisoned bird, and she could not speak.

Tom took her silence for consent, and seizing

the little hand he held, pressed it passionately to his lips.

"I know not," said Amphyllis, recovering herself, "I know not how you can think of me, a poor maiden with a brain-struck father and no riches."

"No riches! Are you not a mine of wealth in your own sweet self? Such grace and charms are better than thousands."

"But your father, and your mother," Amphyllis said. "They would fain you chose another rather than me."

"Nay, nay; mother, forsooth, is taken by you as I am; and Mary, and—but what boots it to talk thus. I care not if blind eyes see not my treasure, so I keep it close and keep it ever more."

And now a sudden gust of chill wind came through the gateway built by old Sir Thomas Erpingham, and Tom said:

"It grows cold; we must away homewards;" and drawing Amphyllis's hood over her head, he stooped, and looking into her eyes, said: "Pledge me your troth—your truth, sweet Amphyllis."

Was it the chill of the spring evening, or was it one of those strange foreshadows of the future which made Amphyllis shiver again, and say in a lighter tone than Tom quite liked to hear, "I cannot stand

longer here ; we had best, as you say, go home ; and see, here are your brother and Moll " ?

" What made you take this way, Tom ? " said his young brother. " Come round to see the swan preserve and the Duke's Palace."

" Nay," said Tom abstractedly, " that will keep till another time. Let us go down to Pull's Ferry, cross the river and walk out to the high ground whence the view of Norwich will be worth looking at."

Tom's voice was not as jocund as usual, and Mary wondered if Amphyllis had been contrary in her mood.

Truth to tell, Amphyllis's young heart was stirred by the breath of love, but it was scarcely more as yet than the ruffling of the surface. The deeps had not been sounded.

The courtier-like flattery of Hal Bendish had given her as it were a glimpse of what might lie before her in the future—fine dress, and even notice at Court. After a life hidden in the shadows of illness, and poverty, and death, it was natural that Amphyllis should rejoice in the sweetness of freedom, and variety, and admiration. She had, as we know, plenty of spirit and determination, as she showed when she fought against the fierce wind in the evening when she went to fetch the Doctor for her father.

Tenderness, too, and love lay within, but Tom's hand had scarcely yet awoke them in full force. Everything was new and strange to her, and as yet she rather shrank from a binding promise, and "plighting a troth," as Tom called it.

As she passed from under the shadow of the old gateway of Sir Thomas Erpingham she linked her arm in Moll's, and Tom had to be content to walk on the other side and try to catch furtive glances from those beautiful eyes.

The walk was not extended over the river, for Moll said it was time they should return, as it might happen that Nancy and Bess would want some assistance in the preparations for the supper and dance and would say she ought to be there to give it.

Amphyllis was quite ready to return, but Tom was unwilling to do so. He tried to persuade Amphyllis to get into the old ferry-boat and cross to the further side.

"Nay, Tom, do not press her," said his sister. "If she is to dance to-night she will be tired with being so much on foot."

Tom reluctantly gave up his plan, and Moll turning away with Robert, he and Amphyllis were left by the posts which made a rough landing-stage for the passengers who used the flat-bottomed boat.

The sluggish Yare was flowing out-seaward, and the sunset sky was reflected in its dark waters, discoloured often by the dyeing of the cloths in the warehouses lying below Bishop's Gate. But the heights, as east country folk understand heights, of Mousehold, and the rising ground leading up to the few scattered cottages which then formed Thorpe Hamlet, were smiling in the evening light,—the low sun giving the colour to the sandy soil and making it of a rich orange hue.

Amphyllis stood watching the river, and listening to the pleasant ripple which it made against the posts.

The two figures thrown out into strong relief by the old gate-house behind them, were seen by some one on the opposite bank, who hailed the ferryman by waving his arm.

"Quick, and let us turn back," said Amphyllis; "there is Andrew returning from Thorpe, he will be on us if we linger."

"Nay, the water is between us," said Tom, taking off his little plumed cap, and calling in a loud resonant voice :

"Good-evening to you, Master Whitelock; and a safe voyage," he added, laughing.

Andrew made no reply; he watched his cousin's little figure disappear with a sigh. He did not

quicken his pace when he had crossed the river in the old boat, and dropped his small coin into the horny palm of the ferryman ; but he kept the figures, in which he had so keen an interest, well in view, till they had passed under Saint Ethelbert's Gateway, and he could see them no more.

Not a gesture of Tom Browne's was lost on Andrew. He saw him bend towards Amphyllis ; he watched the little head turned first away from Tom then gradually towards him, as he seemed to look down into the fair face, which the hood partly hid from his view.

Andrew, with the instinct which is born of jealousy, could interpret every sign as that of love. Tom pleading, Amphyllis yielding, and he left far out in the cold !

And then Andrew reproached himself for his levity in ever dreaming of love for his gay, beautiful cousin. He would crush it out, he would fight against it as a snare of the evil one. Puritan though he was, the story of St. Dunstan was familiar to him, and he vowed that as he, in a benighted age of priestcraft had fought, so would he fight against this earthly love which seemed to have taken possession of him, and held him in chains. Andrew Whitelock was of the stuff which makes martyrs, and he would willingly have gone to the stake for his faith. How was it then, that this love for Amphyllis held him with such

a dominant power; that before he reached the Cringleford cottage he had softened so much to-



ST. ETHELBERT'S GATE.

wards the thought of his cousin, that he was debating within himself whether he might not ask her to be

his wife, and, haply, train her for the service of the Lord? All through the night he saw her image rise before him in the close Puritan cap, plain kerchief crossed on her breast, and thick stuff skirt of homespun cloth. He pictured her with all her golden locks cut close to her small head, and all her little knots of ribbon, and dainty finery gone; and he smiled at the fair vision of himself, called to some sphere of usefulness, and Amphyllis at his side—the mother of children, which should be as an heritage and gift from the Lord, and trained for Him.

Then he would check the vain longings, wrestle in prayer, gather round him his harsh creed like armour, and vow again and again to resist the wiles of Sâtan, coming to him under the guise of his fair and beautiful cousin.

So the hours passed in the cottage; and Bridget and Joan kept alternate watch by the invalid, who had become more restless, and was clamouring for the dram, which the Doctor, who had paid a visit that afternoon, had forbidden; and so the long hours passed, while Amphyllis was tasting the forbidden sweets for which she had so often longed, and which seemed to have come to her all unawares, and therefore had a zest and flavour which would last, she thought, for many a day.

When Tom and Amphyllis reached the Doctor's house after their walk, Moll had already divested herself of her out-of-door garments, and was in the kitchen and buttery, helping her elder sister, Nan, to prepare some dainty dishes.

"At last!" exclaimed Bess, the eldest daughter of the house, as Tom and Amphyllis appeared, "at last! You must have come, methinks, at a snail's trot. Ah, well, we will not rate you. Methinks you have found each other's company pleasant enow."

"Now, Tom, no more of Mistress Windham till the supper is served. She is to come with us and choose some gaudy trifles for the party, and mind, Tom, and make yourself fine as a popinjay, for you have plenty of rivals coming. Mr. Edward Howard has been invited, and said he, he would sooner sup at the Doctor's house than any in the county; and Tom Brookes, to say nothing of the smart Hal. They will outdo you, Tom, and Ned likewise, unless you have a care."

So chattering and laughing, Bess led Amphyllis up the wide staircase, and again ascended another flight till they reached two spacious chambers, opening the one from the other, where Dr. Thomas Browne's elder daughters slept, and where the tiring-woman looked after their wardrobes and that of Madam

Browne, an office which in those days was no sinecure, when the fashion of the times was, after the strictness of the preceding ten years, breaking forth in all manner of vanity and extravagance.

As I have said, the Duke's Palace was as the Court to the city of Norwich and the neighbourhood, and the young women who might at any time be summoned to some great festivity at the Palace, must be prepared with the proper amount of dresses, so as not to be seen too frequently in the same fashion.

"And now," said Bess, "we must consult over your dress with Patience. That is a well-chosen name for one who hath need of Job's to suit all our vagaries. Father saith we are getting close to her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's wardrobe, and that we shall leave gowns enow behind to clothe the poor of Norwich for a year when we die. See now, Patience," she continued, addressing a sharp-featured woman who was twisting some gold thread into a knot of blue ribbon, "see now, Patience, open the big bureau, and out with the bravest skirt and bodice which fit Nan. Mine would be too big, for I am twice your size, little maiden. Patience will love to work on your gold hair, and fit it with the little pointed head-dress of pearls and gold beads which mother bought from Mistress Townsend when she was pressed for money."

Patience, who while Bess rattled on, had been quietly surveying Amphyllis, now said with a sniff:

"Perhaps you are over hasty, Mistress Betty, and the young gentlewoman may prefer wearing her own clothes."

Bess stamped her foot impatiently.

"What a farrago of nonsense! She is to be the star to-night, and turn all the heads of the young gentlemen. But trust me, and I'll find a way." And Bess began to rummage in the deep chest, till Patience, throwing down her work, exclaimed:

"Have a care, Mistress Betty; and what will my lady say if you spoil her gold taffeta, Mistress Betty?"

But Betty laughed gaily.

"She shall be brave for once," she exclaimed, "and we will see how the heads are turned below stairs. But listen, I prythee, Mistress Amphyllis. The men are all alike, and they just flit from one flower to another, like a parcel of painted butterflies. First one, then t'other—and we are all angels by turns."

Amphyllis laughed, and seated herself on the oak bench, where her figure could be reflected in a mirror. It was not every house that possessed a mirror in those days, and this was an oval, not very flattering in its reflection, but it made poor little Amphyllis's

heart beat with gratified vanity as she felt herself the object of admiring interest to the tiring-woman, Patience, as well as to Bess, who was now joined by Nan, as delighted as her sister in the dressing of the fair beauty who had come amongst them. It speaks much for these daughters of Dr. Thomas Browne, that they were so willing to show their guest to the expected company to the best advantage as they thought. But I think that Moll might be right when she came up to the chamber, and scanning Amphyllis with her large, serious eyes, said :

"I like her best, methinks, in her own garments, though these suit her well, and the bodice is a trifle long."

"Now, then, sober face," exclaimed Nan ; "do not pick holes. Hast never heard, fine feathers make a fine bird?"

"I like a bird in its own feathers best," was the quiet answer. "You do not mend matters by pluming a partridge like a peacock."

"Nay, who could call this a peacock?" exclaimed Betty, giving a finishing crimp with her fingers to the wide ruffle of lace falling round the slender white throat, which supported the graceful little head, as a stalk supports a flower.

The wealth of golden hair was turned back from the

low white brow, and fell in waves and ripples on a bodice of white and gold taffeta, edged with lace, the love-lock brought forward, and tied with a knot of blue and gold ribbon. More costly lace covered the round arms just below the elbow, and the pointed bodice opened to display folds of the same fabric which covered the swan-like neck beneath it.

The skirt of the dress was pale blue satin, crossed with gold thread and velvet, and short enough to display a pair of tiny feet, which were encased in highheeled shoes ; the boots being red to contrast with the gown, and furnished with bright buckles which gleamed and shimmered at every movement of the dainty feet.

"And now she must be put through some steps in the dance," Nan exclaimed. "What figure do you know, Mistress Windham?"

"I know none but a country dance. I have never seen any grand dancing. I had better sit still."

"Now, nay, what folly ! sit still, indeed ! Tom will see to that ! But we will dress, now, in what fine things Patience has left. Nay, not my dove-coloured sacque, Patience ; I am no Quaker. Bring me the crimson sarcenet, and the ribbons to match with the violet bodice and pearls."

"Meanwhile Amphyllis can sit and rest, and then

we will go down to the big hall, and if the company are not come, trip about a little. Haste, Moll, and dress."

"I do not care to come to supper," said Moll ; "my head pains me a little. I will rest quiet in father's study. I would like to have a word with him when he returns."

"Is he gone forth again? Ah! what a life is a doctor's; no rest, night or day."

"An' it please you," Amphyllis said, putting her hand in Moll's, "I would fain come with you and rest, while Mistress Bess and Nan attire themselves."

"And I will gladly have your company," was Moll's answer. "We shall be at peace in father's study."

"Have a care not to displace her dress; it would be a sin, when we have spent so much time over it."

"Nay, I will see to that," said Moll; as she drew the heavy door towards her, and escaped with her new friend.

There was no afternoon tea in those days. The only substitute was sweetened drinks, with various flavours, and biscuits, also well sugared and spiced. Moll went to the buttery, where great preparations were being made for supper, which Mistress Browne herself, with due regard to the honour of entertaining Mr. Howard, was superintending.

"Nay, Moll, thou art a good girl," she exclaimed ; "but not a cook or handy. Make thyself scarce." And Mistress Dorothy Browne began afresh to lament over the cygnets which had, when put upon the spit, testified to their having been kept a trifle too long by an odour too strong to be agreeable.

"Give me a few cracknells, mother mine," said Moll, caressingly, "and a cup of red drink flavoured with sweet margery. Amphyllis and I are both spent ; we have been a-foot, with Tom and Bob, till we are ready to drop."

"Off, then, with you," said one of the servants, who was hot and flustered with the sudden incursion of guests ; and especially such guests as those who came from the Palace. "Off with you, then, Mistress Moll ; and take the cup and platter, for I am driven like a hunted rat in the garret, and that's the truth."

Moll needed no second bidding, and was soon in the library, where she found Amphyllis seated in one of the high-backed chairs, looking round the room with wondering eyes.

"There," said Moll, "nibble away at these cracknells, and sip this drink ; it is mighty good, I'll warrant."

Amphyllis, in some fear of doing any damage to her borrowed garments, gladly obeyed ; and then Moll drew a low stool before the hearth, and clasping her

arms round her knees, she looked up at Amphyllis, with a face serious in its wistfulness, and yet full of admiration.

"How many great books your father hath, and pictures. Has he not written a wonderful book himself?"

"Yes, more than one; but one has made him famous. It is the story of dear father's inner man. I will show you one copy; he hath put my name in it, for he saith I shall prize it in the future time if I do not now. There seem deep thoughts in it, which I cannot fathom. Father saith I must not puzzle my head too much; but there are words in it which anyone can understand. It is most wondrous that father wrote it when very young — no older than Tom, or certain sure no older than Ned, and yet it is full of the wisdom of an old man."

Moll was turning over the pages of the "Religio Medici" as she spoke.

"Why, it is not a printed book! Is it not printed?" Amphyllis exclaimed.

"Printed, yes! but this precious copy is one of the first father wrote. He made many copies—and from this has erased some things that he would not have me at my tender age read. And thereby hangs a tale. No one really knows how, but certain it is,

that a written copy was filched from him, printed, and sold, and with no name thereto. Then a brave gentleman, one Sir Kenelm Digby, having had it presented to him by my lord Doret, set himself to read it, and wrote in a short space a treatise on it, finding fault and giving praise also. This coming to father's ears, the whole matter was brought to light, and ended well, for it sent the fame of the book far and wide, and knit my father and the brave knight, Sir Kenelm Digby, in a strong friendship. Thus good came out of evil.

"All this happened many a long year ago, when the first troubles of the King and Parliament were beginning. Father has writ many books since, some great, some small, but this is the crown of all."

Moll kindled into enthusiasm as she spoke. Her father was her world, and her ideal of all that was great and noble. What were the gaities of the Palace, and the grand clothes in which her sister had dressed the beautiful Amphyllis, in comparison with the happiness of sitting by, while her father jotted down in one of his voluminous note-books the thoughts and inquiries which were ever seething in his brain.

"You must be proud of such a father," said Amphyllis, with a sigh, which raised the folds of

costly lace as they lay across her breast. "You must be proud of such a father."

"Aye," said Moll, who had propped her chin upon her hand, as she leaned upon the table where the open book lay. "Aye, but my love is greater than my pride, for methinks other men may have been as clever and reasoning ; but how few as good ! never turning away from the sick and poor ; courted by the rich, but never fawning on them, as Aunt Bendish doth, and Hal. Well-a-day, I must not run on thus, or you will be weary."

"Nay," said Amphyllis, whose rosy lips were, nevertheless, parting for a half-suppressed yawn ; "nay, I only marvel that you say not far more. It must be a life the highest might envy to live in this mansion, with all that heart can desire."

"But," said Moll, "it is not the mansion or the fair surroundings that make us happy. If we bickered and wrangled, and if father were austere, and mother cross-grained, and we thought of nothing but eating and drinking, and grand company, we should not be happy."

Amphyllis looked doubtful.

"These things you speak of help to make folks happy. I know all the last dull winter, shut up in the cottage, with poor father taking raving fits,

Andrew preaching and scolding, and Bridget looking like a worn-out martyr, I have felt ready to fly anywhere, just for a change. Then Mistress Howse's niece would tell of the grand doings, and the coach sent from the Palace at Christmas and New Year for the young maidens ; and how could I choose but wish the coach could come for *me*, and then sigh as I remembered it would have been no gain had it called, for I had no brave clothes like these ? It is all right and good that you should be contented here in this mansion, but just let one of you change with me for a month, and ah ! you would soon cry out, and find how the shoe pinched."

"Aye," said Moll, "that may be true, but given a palace or a kingdom without love, and a cottage serves as well."

"I would fain have your love and friendship, Mistress Moll," Amphyllis said, laying her hand on Moll's shoulder. She would have liked to lay her head there, and kiss the pale cheek, which contrasted with her own roses, but she was too tightly imprisoned in her fine bodice, and afraid of disarranging her love-lock, with its knot of blue and gold.

"Friendship and love are solemn things," was Moll's answer. "But it is but to look at you, and love you,

Amphyllis. From the first moment I set my eyes on you, I warmed towards you. We will be friends, and, perchance, more anon. Tom would fain make you our sister, methinks."

Amphyllis gave a little laugh, and said :

"Nay, we will not talk of matters like that, not now."

"Will you listen to the words my father has writ on friendship and love?"

Amphyllis withdrew her hand and leaned back in her old position.

"Yes," she said, "unless it is time we went to supper."

"We sup late, and the guests are not come, or we should hear their voices ; and father is not returned : let me read."

And then Moll, in slow, deliberate tones, tracing each line of the fine penmanship on the thick parchment with her slender forefinger, read from the book before her :—

" ' There are wonders in true affection. It is a body of enigmas, mysteries, and riddles, wherein two so become one as they both become two. I love my friend before myself, and yet methinks I do not love him enough. Some few months hence, my multiplied affection will make me think I have not loved

him at all. He cannot love his friend with this noble ardour that will in a competent way affect all. United souls are not satisfied with embraces, but desire to be truly each other, which being impossible, their desires are infinite, and must proceed without a possibility of satisfaction.' ”

Moll glanced at her listener. She did not look as if she were quite following the words, and she was toying with the string of pearls which Nan had tied round her neck.

The finger moved down the page, and Moll seemed to be seeking some words which should make a deeper impression.

“Hearken again,” she said at last. “I think the kernel of father’s words lieth here ; he saith :

“‘I cannot contentedly frame a prayer for myself in particular without a catalogue for my friends ; nor request a happiness wherein my social disposition doth not desire the fellowship of my neighbour.

“‘I never hear the toll of the passing bell, though in my mirth, without my prayers and best wishes for the departing spirit.

“‘I cannot go to cure the body of my patient, but I forget my profession, and call unto God for his soul. I cannot see any one say his prayers, but, instead of imitating him, I fall into supplication for him, who,

perhaps, is no more to me than a common nature ; and if God hath vouchsafed an ear to my supplications, there are surely many happy that never saw me, and enjoy the blessings of mine unknown devotion. ” ”

The door had opened softly, and a voice was heard.

“ Why, Moll ; why, Moll ! who have you got here to instruct ? Sweet Moll ! ” he continued, putting his arm round her. “ So it is Mistress Windham, arrayed like a princess ; and it becomes her mightily. It is not often such a sight greets my eyes here ; is it, sweet Moll ? Well, well ; what page have you turned up ? ”

Dr. Thomas Browne had seated himself in his large oak chair and taken Moll on his knee.

“ What page was it ? ”

“ I have been reading your words concerning love and friendship, father. I told Mistress Amphyllis friendship was a grave matter, though I am willing, indeed, to have her for my friend. ”

“ Aye ; and here is another who is willing for something more than friendship. Come in, honest Tom, nor be afraid your angel should spread her wings. ”

“ Mr. Howard is arrived, and other guests. My mother sent me, ” said Tom, flushing rosy red ; for

the sight of Amphyllis, as she rose from her seat and turned to meet him, fairly amazed him. Amphyllis's **beauty** was just of that brilliant, sparkling type which rich colour sets off. If she had been beautiful before she was ten times more beautiful now.

"Take her off then, Tom, nor grudge her to your guests, for the host must ever put himself last. Go, dear child," he said in the tender voice his own children knew so well. "Go, and be happy. I have seen your father, and quieted him again; so be at rest. And Tom, advise your mother that I shall stop awhile with Moll here, and join the guests later, for I am somewhat weary."



WAS IT ALL A DREAM?

AMPHYLLIS WINDHAM'S appearance in the great hall where supper was laid caused some sensation amongst the ladies present. There were two or three matrons, with daughters of their own, who bestowed upon her appraising and critical glances after the fashion of mothers, whether of the seventeenth or nineteenth century.

While some praised, and others qualified the praise with criticism, all asked the important question, "Who is she?"

The young beauties, Mistress Anne Ogle and Mistress Cradock, said, "She was mighty fair," to each other, but, tossing their pretty heads, doubted if she was quite the mode; or, in other words, if she had much style. But the great authority, Mr. Howard, paid the little beauty much attention, and Hal Bendish was eclipsed. He led her out to dance the new French dance, "the Bracile," which required but little skill, and for which Amphyllis's natural grace and fairy steps sufficed. It is described as

un espèce de danse de plusieurs personnes qui se tiennent par le main ou qui se menent tour à tour. Mr. Howard declared that if Lent were not at hand he would open his house again at once, that he might let all the county bask in the light of the new sun which had arisen in the firmament.

He extracted a promise from Mistress Browne that she would bring Amphyllis to the Palace the very next morning to stay for the mid-day repast, that he might show her his "poor place" and the new garden, where workmen were busily at work with the new bowling-green, and "the wilderness" which would be unrivalled in that part of the county, so he hoped.

Mistress Browne accepted the invitation with due respect, for the Howards were as royalty itself in Norwich, and Amphyllis could hardly believe her identity with the girl in the Cringleford Cottage going about household work in her plain homespun and large white cap to preserve her shining hair from dust, and perpetual attendance on her poor father, who, irritable and captious, it must be confessed, had put the sweetness of her disposition and true filial affection to a severe proof.

It was not till the guests were nearly all departed that Amphyllis noticed that Tom's bright face was clouded and anxious.

She fluttered up to him, and said, "You have not asked me to dance, Master Tom. Let us take a place now. The music strikes up, and Mr. Howard saith——"

"Nay," said Tom, shortly, "nay, I would as lieve sit still."

"Then I will sit still also," said Amphyllis, conscious that she had been rather neglectful of her first friend.

"Then we will go to the gallery," said Tom, delighted, leading her up a few wide steps which took them to a gallery or platform, raised some twenty feet above the body of the hall. "We can sit here quiet and unobserved."

"It has all been delightful," said Amphyllis, "and I should be so happy if—why is there always an *if*? I think of my father, and that I ought not to leave him. I think of going back to the dull, dull old cottage; of Bridget's sad face; of Andrew's scolding; and that all this, that I love, only comes to me as a rare treat, while to all these gay ladies it is an everyday thing—nothing surprising; even my beautiful clothes are borrowed. And you are so dull, not like the same you were. What is amiss?"

Tom did not feel as if he could press the suit he had begun under the old gateway. He only said:

"I am glad you are happy, Mistress Amphyllis."

"Do you think I am wicked to be happy while my father is so sick? *Do you?*" she urged.

"Nay, surely not. As I said, I am right glad you should be happy here in my father's house. I hope you will frequent this same house often. When I am tossing on the deep, I shall like to think it is so," he added.

"How could you choose to be a sailor?" Amphyllis said. "I should be afraid of great stormy waves and hurricanes: and then though to fight an enemy on land must be terrible; to fight at sea must be far worse."

"Nay," said Tom. "Why should it be? Besides we must all serve our king and country: and what odds whether on sea or land? Then the sea is so grand and free; when it makes a circle all round, meeting the sky in a soft line, and the sunshine glitters on the blue waters, it is like a dream of beauty. But when the storm lashes the waves to fury and they roll like mountains, tossing the foam from their dark crests, and the good ship rides over them and sinks into valleys, only to mount again,—it is grand, it is glorious!"

For the time Tom lost the lover in the sailor, as he went on to tell Amphyllis of the tideless waters of the sunny Mediterranean, of the olive slopes and orange groves at the foot of the mountains, standing, some

snow-capped ; some rugged and rocky, and defying the encroachment of the waves which kissed their feet with a low, musical, unceasing chime. Tom told also of the dark-eyed women, with their scarlet handkerchiefs bound round their raven hair, of the many-coloured dresses which gave such life to the scene when the ship put in at any port, and the women came chattering to the quay with large baskets of ripe figs and oranges, carried on their heads with a grace which no English folk could rival.

"My father," he said, "sent me out to see the world, learn French, and pick up everything when I was but fourteen ; and nevertheless, when I see lazy, idle popinjays like Hal Bendish, I am proud I went abroad, nor spent my youth in Norwich."

Amphyllis sighed.

"I have seen the sea twice," she said, "at Lowestoft and Yarmouth, and I sailed once on the Broads, where the water-lilies rock on the little waves, and I loved it ; but the big waves of the sea looked cruel, rushing in one after the other and breaking angrily."

"If I am here in June, as I may perchance be, I will have a barge with sails and rudder, and we will go to the Broads, and you shall have the lilies for your own, and see the swans riding like ships at anchor, and the big herons swooping down on the

water, and the kingfishers darting to and fro with their gay plumage. You would like that?" Tom asked eagerly. "It would please you?"

"Ah yes! you are very good : and so is everyone." This addition rather took off the edge of Tom's pleasure, but he had not time to respond. His father had discovered their retreat and came to join them, saying :

"Your mother needs you, Tom, to find a knot of ribbon Mistress Ogle has dropped."

Amphyllis, in all her fresh young beauty, and delight with all around, awoke in the good physician's heart the tenderest interest. But as a father of many children he thought it his duty to be candid with her.

"My Tom," he began, as he seated himself by Amphyllis's side, "is a fine honest fellow, but he has to work hard and long ere he can make provision for a home. Has he pressed his suit?"

"Nay, kind sir," said Amphyllis, reddening; "nay, he was discoursing as any friend might discourse of his travels, but of nought else."

"Well, leave *well* alone; you have taken us all captive, Mistress Windham, and we are willing prisoners. I saw your father this afternoon, as I told you; he is mending somewhat, but the crave for

drams was on him, and I left a draft to quell it. Still I fear me the brain is so fevered and over-wrought that the end may come ere we look for it."

"I scarce think I do well to be here," Amphyllis said, her eyes growing dim.

"Yes, you do well, for the young, the very young need variety; I forbid no innocent amusement to my children. I guard them by their good mother's presence; and she and I are at one in this, that it is better to make one's own home the scene of pleasure and amusement than force one's children to look for it out of doors. The Court is alas! alas! setting no good example, and the laws of God and man are, I fear me, set at nought. Thus the maidens are safer at home than abroad. But about honest Tom, as I call him, has he told his love, but three days old? Love is a plant that springs up quick enow, and provided it strikes a deep root there is no cause to cavil. I shall counsel him to leave you free, and believing also that he may thus prove if the root aforesaid has struck deep. If he comes home sound in body from this next cruise, I will say to him that he is welcome to win your favour, unless one more fortunate step in before him. Now we will join the rest, and assist in speeding the parting guests."

The next day was as full of delight to Amphyllis

as the preceding one had been. Her horizon was widening fast, and the world had seemed in less than one short week to have grown vaster and far more beautiful for her.

Mistress Browne, attended by her sons Edward and Tom, and her daughters, set out early to Christ Church to hear a sermon from a preacher then well esteemed in Norwich, Mr. King. It was now become the fashion to attend the Christ Church or Cathedral services on week-days, and on their way through the close, passing under St. Ethelbert's gateway again, the doctor's family were joined by my lady Ogle, a Mistress Windham, and Mistress Cradock.

Mistress Windham was somewhat stiff when Mistress Browne named "Amphyllis Windham."

"Windham! What branch of the family, prythee?" Then, in a patronizing tone, "Ye must be one of the Windhams on the Suffolk border, of kin, it is true, to my late lord, but in a remote degree."

Amphyllis's spirit rose, and greatly to Tom's admiration and to Mistress Browne's discomfiture, she said, "I showed no readiness, Madam, to claim kinship. My father came of a noble stock, who deemed courtesy a sign of nobleness, whether to the rich or the poor. I am your servant, Madam," with a low curtesy, "Amphyllis Windham, if not your kin!"

"Hoity-toity!" exclaimed my lady Ogle, who was jealous of the beauty which had thrown her own daughters into the shade the night before. "How mighty proud we are, child! You have to learn some lessons before you can take your place as Windham or no Windham in the great world, I'll warrant you."

Amphyllis might have rejoined again, had not Mistress Browne said, "Hush, then, Amphyllis. We are at the church door, and after prayers and sermon we are bidden to the Palace."

Tom, who had with difficulty repressed his indignation, now whispered, "Take no heed of the old pea-hen; she is always screeching about her family tree. There have been rotten trunks as well as branches, if I am not mistaken. Nay, Amphyllis, I hate to see you vexed; smile again," for the hot tears of mortification had sprung to the girl's eyes as she overheard Mistress Windham.

"I know now who the maiden is. I mind me there was one Hal Windham, who went mad over alchemy and the black art. A poor creature, at the best, who was, methinks, the prey of some witch."

Tom drew Amphyllis hastily aside, and Moll, with ready sympathy, put her hand in her friend's.

The vast cathedral seemed to shadow her with peace as she passed along the nave, and dwarf into

insignificance the petty rudenesses of the great ladies who strutted on before, with a servant apiece, bearing their mufflers, and wraps, and heavy-clasped books.

Amphyllis listened to the music with almost ecstatic delight, and Tom watched her sweet up-turned face, and was delighted to mark that she was all unconscious of the bold, admiring glances directed towards her by some young gallants in the oak stalls opposite.

Dressed in the extreme of prevailing fashion, with curled hair, and laces and ruffles, their swords dangling at their sides, and their plumed caps on their knees, they lounged and whispered to each other, taking out a comb now and then, and combing their love-locks with ostentatious display. They were of the type of young cavaliers that at this time were an abomination in the eyes of the Puritans and the people then beginning to be well known—the followers of George Fox.

We can scarcely wonder at this, for all this outward show and disregard of proprieties must have jarred, indeed, on those who had been taught to mistrust even all things beautiful as evil, and to hew down sculpture, and ruthlessly smash coloured glass as signs of Popish idolatry and badges of the Evil One.

The noble church where Amphyllis sat, wonder-struck, with its stately proportions, had suffered much in the time of the Great Rebellion ; so much that the floors of the choir and nave were still broken and uneven, and things were only restored to partial decency and order. The fury of the mob—who were as unreasoning as mobs commonly are—had, under the authority of the Sheriff of Norwich, a man named Tofts, rushed in to the work of desecration like so many wild animals, trampling down and tearing up, smashing windows and defacing monuments, till the interior of the noble church was reduced to a deplorable condition. Ribald tunes were blown upon the organ pipes, and many a lovely cluster of flowers and leaves, carved with consummate skill, centuries before, was battered into powder.

Recollections of those days were fresh in the memory of the philosopher-physician, Dr. Browne. He had seen the service books and the singing books carried to the wide Market Square and burnt, “a low-conditioned wretch,” as an old chronicler of the times says, “trailing a cope in the dirt, and heading the procession, and singing in impious scorn the words of the Litany. The cathedral was then filled with musketeers, all drinking as freely as if they had been in a roadside hostelry.”

It was not more than a score of years before this time, since the Court, then sitting in the Guildhall, ordered that the figures of Moses and Aaron and the four Evangelists removed from the Cathedral, and some other superstitious pictures, should be burned in the open market.

The times had grown quieter since then. The Civil War, and the extinction of the Commonwealth, were beginning to look like a far-past history to the young of that time; but the swell which the storm had left was still felt on the waters, and ominous clouds were already gathering on the horizon.

The Dutch War was assuming a serious aspect, and the supplies for the Navy were very insufficient.

There was a loud outcry for money, and the king found it so difficult to raise it, that even that buoyant, light-hearted secretary of the Admiralty, Samuel Pepys, was in despair. That is to say, he was greatly disturbed for a few hours, and then would go to the play, with his wife in some new finery, which rivalled his own, and forget the Dutch, and the cry of the Lord Treasurer, who, when he received the large account of the charge of the Navy and felt the want of money, held up his hands, crying out :

“What shall we do? Why, what means all this,

Mr. Pepys? What would you have me to do? Why will not the people lend their money? Why will they not trust the king as they trusted Oliver?"

All these questions, more especially the last, remained unanswered.

Tom Browne kept very near Amphyllis when service was over, and had a jealous eye upon the young gentlemen who ambled out in front of the party, turning their heads every moment to stare at Amphyllis. But she gave them no encouragement, and followed the direction of Tom's finger, as he pointed to the wonderful bosses of the roof, on which their young strong sight could discern some of the quaint figures which set forth the story of the Creation, the Flood, and events in the lives of the patriarchs.

Her face upturned, her hood fell back; and her hair loosening, she attracted the attention of the ladies, who had so pointedly ignored her an hour before. But Tom gently helped Amphyllis to replace the hood; he did not care that so many eyes should rest upon the object of his own adoration.

The party now went to the Palace, which excited the jealousy of the ladies, who followed their retreating figures with envious eyes.

"Faith! the Brownes are fine folk, and know how

to plume their feathers to advantage!" said my lady Ogle.

"Yes, indeed; it's somewhat new, when folk, who live by the sickness and death of their neighbours, should be picked out for honour by the off-shoots of Dukes, and live like princes themselves. But all things are topsy-turvy now-a-days."

Mr. Howard received his guests with a courtly grace, which set even Amphyllis at ease at once. She had felt shy and miserable under the gaze of the ladies who had made her—as they would have themselves rejoiced to know—feel very small in her own eyes. Her poor surroundings at Ford End Cottage rose before her, and the little common household matters in which her mornings were spent; then the perpetual attendance on her poor father, hearing the same things said a hundred times. Her only variety an hour or two with Mrs. Howse at the Mill, and an occasional meeting with her nieces, who boasted of all they did in the way of pleasure, till poor little Amphyllis's heart would flutter with jealous throbs she could not repress.

The grandeur of the Palace, through which Mr. Howard escorted the party, seemed to Amphyllis like a dream, and as if she were a phantom of her ordinary self; moving through these stately halls and

corridors; while Mr. Howard treated her with marked consideration, watching the expression of her lovely young face, with ever increasing interest, though never indulging in the disrespectful stare of the two young gallants in the cathedral.

"Here," said Mr. Howard, "is the room I erected for the entertainment of my friends. It is made for dancing, and answers fairly well, as I hope Mistress Bess will tell you. These hangings were manufactured on purpose by Norwich looms; and I flatter myself that they brought bread to the hungry; for the Norwich trade, like all other trade, had been sadly drooping under the baleful breath of anarchy and rebellion. In that large cupboard," he said, "are the furnishings of this room, all of silver and gold, and we do not use them, except for feast days."

Then they passed on to the rooms hung with pictures of the best masters; and a beautiful collection of jewels, which were safely locked in glass-cases, but which Mr. Howard opened, that Amphyllis might examine the lovely stones.

Her delight with the deep purple amethyst and golden topaz, and changing opals, was the delight of a child. And when Mr. Howard put a string of pearls round her neck, the tears sprang to her eyes, for as he locked the cabinet, looking at her, he said :

"Keep them, fair Mistress Amphyllis, as a token of your visit to the Palace."

It seemed too much happiness coming all at once ; and she could only say :

"How good you are, sir ! I would fain thank you, as I ought, but I cannot."

Mr. Howard smiled in reply, and led the way to his own closet, where Amphyllis forgot all the pearls and precious stones in gazing at a large picture of the Virgin with the Infant Saviour in her arms. She had never seen such a picture before, and she felt as if she could never look away from it. But Bess and Nan roused her from her rapt, intense gaze to look at some marvellous ivory carvings, and delicate china, and medallions cut in agate, with many other things in chased gold and silver.

Then Mr. Howard talked of the large piece of ground he had lately bought, which was designed for the summer recreation of the people of Norwich, as the large hall was for winter amusement. The bowling-green was already famous, and John Evelyn's description of the place a few years later shows to what a state of perfection the grounds had been brought.

The party dined in one of the smaller halls, and all the dishes were of gold, and gentle strains of music sounded during the meal.

Mr. Howard's tastes were refined, and his conversation full of anecdote and interest. This was very different from the badinage and often broad jokes which the example of the Merry Monarch had made the fashion in the upper circles of the day.

Women were valued solely for their beauty or ready repartee, and what was often offensive flattery was supposed to be the way to win favour with fair ladies.

But Mr. Howard was a man of a higher type. He was afterwards created Lord Howard of Castle Rising, and later, Earl of Norwich, and Earl Marshal of England. He was the friend of Evelyn, and when later he became Duke of Norfolk, presented his magnificent collection of marbles to the University of Oxford.

Mistress Browne took leave soon after dinner, though Mr. Howard pressed the whole party to stay for the evening.

"Nay, sir," she said, "for I have to send home in good time my charge, Mistress Amphyllis Windham, whose home is t'other side the city."

These words seemed to bring Amphyllis back to real life, and she said demurely :

"It is even so, sir. I have been neglectful of my father too long, and must hasten to return."

"If you will have it so, I must not say nay," said Mr. Howard, "and I will order a carriage round to convey

you thither : not one of the large coaches where we put fourteen at a pinch, but a small chariot, which will hold the four ladies ; and the young squires can go on foot."

This plan did not find favour in Tom's eyes ; he had contentedly kept in the background during the visit to the Palace, but he had been looking forward to the after part of that day as the sweetest, when he might be allowed, perchance, to have a few minutes alone with Amphyllis. But Mistress Browne was always discreet, and she said quickly :

"Aye, forsooth, my sons can walk, and their sisters and myself ride, as you are pleased to offer it, good sir."

In a few minutes it was all over. Amphyllis was in the chariot with her friends, and Tom's sad, wistful gaze, so unlike his usual bright merry smile, touched his mother's heart, if it did not touch Amphyllis's.

Her last looks were certainly directed towards Mr. Howard, who, as the chariot moved slowly away, stood under the carved portico of the Palace, the very picture of an English nobleman of the time, dressed in his rich velvet suit, with knee-breeches, and buckles glistening in the light, his short cape thrown back over the shoulder, and costly lace about his neck, and his heavily-plumed cap in his hand, as he smiled and bowed low at his departing guests.

"Is he not a brave gentleman!" Nan exclaimed :
"Norwich would be a poor place without him."

"Yes, and he is as good as he is great," said Mistress Browne. "He hath lately paid off large debts to clear his father's name from dishonour, and yet how noble in gifts to the people, and how hospitable to all classes! The inhabitant of a palace like that, with a vast store of treasures, pictures, and beautiful things of every kind, might well be a prince of the realm; and indeed he is a prince, for he will be Duke of Norfolk in due course."

Perhaps there is no period of history when time, as counted by years, seems so short for such great changes to have been effected, as between the middle of the seventeenth century, and the close of the nineteenth.

Two hundred years! only two hundred years! and not a vestige remains of all the grandeur which made the Duke's Palace at Norwich a household word. The name "My Lord's Gardens" clung to a place resorted to as the Wilderness by the Norwich citizens for some time; and, like the phantom of a dream, tradition still points to the spot where the Palace of the Howards rose after repeated demolition, like the Palace of an Eastern fable.

At this date—1665—the third building was not

completed ; but we know, from contemporary records, that it was even then one of the most beautiful homes of the time, and filled with art treasures. And now everything has vanished ! Norwich has lost its princes, and is no longer the home of the Howards.

And yet, as a matter of history, how short a time has passed since the large carriages were to be seen stopping at the old houses which skirted Tombland, and passing through the roughly-paved thoroughfares of Saint George's and Calvert Streets, convey from many a doorstep the maidens and youths who had been bidden to the feast by the noble and generous invitation of Mr. Howard.

It is difficult to realise that the Norwich of to-day is the Norwich of those times, two hundred years ago.

The narrow lanes, which were inaptly called streets, are gone. Business and manufacture leave but little time for Christmas merry-making. Conventional visiting there may be in plenty, but there is now no centre of hospitality, no house where the lover of art and the curious in ivory-work and fine chased plate can resort, sure of a welcome.

The open-hearted welcome of the Howards is a thing of the past, and even the intellectual centre

which the house of the great physician formed may be said to find no parallel.

The times and manners have changed. We are insensibly carried on the stream of progress, and we can see that the big coaches with their four horses, the long entertainments, the throwing open of the Palace gates, when people flocked in, "so that all the beere," an old chronicle says, "that could be set flowing in the streets could not divert the multitude," would not fit in with the days in which we live.

The two hundred years which lie between us and the times of Sir Thomas Browne and Mr. Howard bristle with the inventions and discoveries which have changed the face of Europe. The old cathedral cities, especially those isolated like Norwich, held their world within their walls. Luminous intellects, like Sir Thomas Browne's, shed light upon them from time to time. Lovers of art and all that was beautiful in form and colour, made their mark as Mr. Howard did. Now local interest is becoming fainter and fainter, for quick communication has bridged over space; the barriers are broken down, even as the city walls have crumbled into fragments, and London is the magnet which draws thither every year the gay, the fashionable, the literary and the artistic.

In the old times, travellers like Edward and Thomas Browne came back to their native city with much to tell to those who had much to learn. Stories from the Court and of London life were patiently waited for and eagerly received.

Now, the old cities and provincial towns do not escape the fierce light which beats upon society. When the telegraph flashes news and the daily press prints and circulates it in an hour's time, it is hard for the most inveterate story-teller to be first in the field ; and if any great event happens in Norwich, the whole kingdom may know it, if they care to know it, before night.

This is the necessary result of the breaking down of old barriers by the discoveries of modern science. There is nothing hidden now. Local interests are lost in the interests of the outside world ; and no one can hold his own court, in his own city, like Mr. Howard, or gather round him the young and fair at his bidding, in his own carriages, attended by his own servants.

All has passed away ; and as we walk through the streets of Norwich, and hear the roll of wheels, and the thud of horses' hoofs, and the distant scream of the railway whistle, while the busy and the gay walk and drive in all directions, it is hard to realize

Norwich as it was in the spring afternoon when the chariot from the Duke's Palace rolled slowly towards the market-place, and Mr. Howard retired from the door of his hospitable mansion to read a manuscript Dr. Thomas Browne had lent him on "Urn Burial in Norfolk."



OUTWARD BOUND.

THE clock of St. Peter Mancroft had chimed twelve on the night before Tom Browne's departure, when, seated in his father's library, he awaited his return from a late visit to a patient.

Jonas sat sleeping at his post in the hall, and all the house was mute. The children had been asleep for many hours, and Mistress Browne was so accustomed to her husband's prolonged absence, that she never sat up for him, or was uneasy if he did not return, before the household went to bed.

Tom Browne, however, could not sleep, and he wanted a few parting words with his father. He and his brother Ned were both leaving home early the next day—Ned to see surgical operations at Chirurgeon's Hall, and pick up in the somewhat desultory fashion of the time medical information and instruction from those who were in the foremost ranks of the profession.

Tom was all anxiety to join the second fleet pre-

paring under the command of the Duke of York, and was to bear his father's introduction to the renowned Samuel Pepys, who administered the naval supplies so ably, and set his face against the disgraceful system of selling places, then most openly practised. As Clerk of the Acts to the Navy, Samuel Pepys showed so much discrimination and care, that he won the praise of those in authority, and was marked out for favour.

Thus Dr. Browne knew that a personal interview with Samuel Pepys must be of advantage to his young sailor son, and he had promised to give him the letter of introduction, amongst other things, at parting.

But the hours slipped by, and Tom remained the only occupant of the library. He threw more logs on the fire; he took care to keep the flagon of spiced wine hot; and he listened for every sound that might break the stillness.

The library opened into the hall, and Tom had left the door ajar, that he might be the first to go out to meet his father. Presently he heard a gentle rustling, and a little figure in a long loose robe, with hanging sleeves, came swiftly and softly towards him.

"Why, Moll, sweet Moll, what's amiss?"

Moll threw her arms round her brother's neck, and

said, "I could not sleep, Tom, for thinking it is your last night. I do crave to keep you here."

"Why, Moll, I have been departing so often, that methinks you should be used to it ere now."

"Ah! but this time you go with a sad, not a light, heart, Tom: I see it; I know it. And then you may be killed by those dreadful Dutch."

"Nay now, Moll. Why forebode evil? I do not fear the Dutch. I would fight a dozen of them single-handed, if need were; that does not make my heart heavy."

"I know; I know," said Moll. "I can see it is Amphyllis. Did she not say a kinder word to-day, when you went to say farewell?"

"Kind! Oh, yes, she was kind enow, but one wants a little beyond kindness, Moll. It may be in her sweet heart she may feel some tenderness for me. At first—how long is it ago, Moll? it seems a year—at first, I say, I thought she was ready to put her hand in mine, and let me protect her from the storms of life, as I protected her from the raging wind only a few short days ago; and yet, as I say, it seems a year. But," Tom said, throwing off his sad, dejected air, and drawing himself erect. "But hearken, Moll, I trust to you to keep me forewarned, that I may be forearmed. You must tell me all you can of

Amphyllis ; you must talk to her of me, and keep me in her mind, and, if I fall, you must tell her"—and he took from the pocket near his heart a knot of cherry-coloured ribbon—"say I stole this the night she stole my heart ; that I shall wear it there till I die, and that nightly at my prayers I kiss it, as you see me kiss it now."

Moll was so struck with her gay, merry brother's changed mood, she could hardly speak.

"Promise, Moll—vow that you will do as I bid you, and if I fall, as I may, and a bullet goes straight through this ribbon to my heart, let her know that that heart beat true to God and to her to the last moment of life. Promise, Moll."

"Yes, Tom, dear brave Tom, I promise ; but you will come back, and tell your own tale, you will——"

Tears choked Moll's voice, and as she heard her father's step, she gave Tom one fervent kiss, and was gone.

Dr. Browne saw the little figure flitting up the wide staircase, and said :

"What spirit is that abroad at midnight ? Why, Moll, are you sleep-walking ?" he continued, reaching the spot where Moll had paused, and putting his arm round her, and scanning her face anxiously.

"Nay, dear father ; I could not sleep for thinking

of Tom, and I went down to say a farewell alone with him. He is waiting for you in the library ; and, father, he is so sad to-night, not like himself."

" Well, run off to bed, little one, and do not run the risk of a bad catarrh by treading the corridors with bare feet. Off with you, sweet Moll."

Moll disappeared like the spirit she looked, and her father turned back to the hall, where Jonas was yawning and grunting as he slipped the heavy bolts in their places and toddled off to bed.

" It's not such a fine thing to be a doctor's serving-man," he muttered ; " there be two messages, but they'll keep till the morrow. I ain't a-going to tell him now ; he'd just be off to that sick girl of Mistress Barker's afore I could stop him. Dear heart ! I wonder he has a bit of flesh on his bones, or a scrap of sense left in him, that I do."

The Doctor found Tom setting out the silver cup and a plate of small pasties for his father's refreshment.

" What, honest Tom," the Doctor said, " up still, and thinking of my comfort. Forsooth, I am weary, but I shall soon revive with a sip of wine and those dainty morsels, made by thy mother's hand, Tom, I'll warrant. Take thy share, boy," he continued, pushing the dish towards his son.

"Nay, I have no appetite," said Tom. "Father, you will be good to Amphyllis Windham if I never return."

"Aye, will I not? But cheer up, Tom, and trust in God, and do the right, and all will work round. There is nothing incomplete, Tom. The same hand that rounds the smallest seed globe to perfection, and makes it bear fruit after its kind, rounds our little lives, and they will bear fruit in time, whether we live to see it, or die afore the harvest is ripe. I have no fear for you, honest Tom; did I not send you forth at fourteen, and did you not guide your affairs well and manly when but a child. Go on with confidence and good cheer, Tom, nor be cast down by the longing for a fair woman's love."

"If I felt sure she loved me, father; but I am not sure."

"Well then, have trust; and look you, Tom, that fair child's heart is slow in awaking, and if the glamour of the new world into which she has just opened her eyes dazzles them a bit, the vision will clear and she will see things as they are, and know what a true heart is worth. I was older by ten years ere I loved any woman, and you might have waited, Tom, with advantage; but our good friend here," laying his hand upon a letter addressed to the Clerk of the Acts, "took his wife at fifteen, and they have

had a hard fight for it. I will not grumble at your love, Tom, as I say, if it has a deep root, it will grow and flourish ; if not——”

“It has struck its roots into my heart,” said Tom. “Only death will tear them up.”

“Be it so then, my son,” said the Doctor, holding out his large shapely hand, which Tom grasped ; “be it so, and may God prosper you and your love.”

Then father and son went on to talk of other matters : of the needful money which the Doctor allowed his son in no scant measure ; and a little memorandum was intrusted to the sailor, which was characteristic of the Doctor. This was to impress on him to be on the look-out for any strange phenomenon while at sea, to watch especially for the luminous water which is observed in the Channel sometimes ; to mark the character of the small limpets which cluster at the bottom of the boats ; and to observe the flight of the returning swallows, to note whether one was much in advance of his fellows, or whether the first birds flew in pairs.

These and other inquiries of a like kind were not trivial to Dr. Browne ; nothing was too small for him to notice and compare with something else ; to find out affinity and unity of purpose in all the works of Nature.

Father and son did not part till the clocks had struck two, and then Tom, putting his letters of introduction and other papers into his pocket-book, bid his father good-night, and left him with a lighter heart.

"Happy the sons who have a father like ours, Edward," he said, as, the next day, the two brothers pursued their journey to London.

"I say 'Amen' to that, honest Tom," said Edward. "There is a zest in life, when those who gave it to you make all you are, and do, part and parcel of themselves. To think of that soft buffoon, Hal Bendish, whose mother either fondles him like a puppet, or rates him as a scapegrace, makes me say with all my soul, thank God for a father and mother like ours."

"Aye, and a sister like Moll," was on Tom's lips; but he did not say so aloud. Edward was apt to look on Moll as a visionary and dreamer, and think that her ailments were somewhat fanciful; but to Tom, since this episode with Amphyllis, she was dearer than ever.

The brothers' journey to London was not achieved in a day. They slept the first night at Barton Mills, where Charles the First had once passed a night, leaving on the walls of his room written these words: "Caballero Honrado."

Like his distinguished father, Edward Browne was always thirsting for some knowledge, and every association with the past called up for him a host of interests.

Tom roused himself to enter into his brother's conversation, and was proud—after they had supped at Chesterfield—to hear Mr. Bedingsfield, who had travelled much in Flanders, say that an hour's converse with Edward Browne was worth a month's idle talk with the ordinary type of young gallants with which the country was infested.

Tom spent the first night in London at the "Green Dragon," with his brother, and then they parted.

"Keep up your heart, honest Tom," were amongst Edward's last words. "'Faint heart never won fair ladye.' Dost remember the great Queen's rejoinder to the gallant Sir Walter Raleigh?"

"Nay," said Tom, rather despondently, "I know not that I ever heard it."

"Why, when that brave fellow had first linked himself to the Court, and the favour shown him by the Queen excited jealousy all round, he scratched with a diamond on a pane of glass—

'Fain would I climbe, but that I fear to fall'—

He meant Her Majesty to read it, as she did, and, taking a ring from her royal finger, scratched beneath it—

‘If thy heart fail thee, do not climbe at all.’”

“Ah! and what did he get by climbing, eh! good Edward? Did he not die miserably in the Tower—doomed to death by the caprice of a pedantic tyrant? That was no great crown to win!”

“How do you know, Tom, what his crown may be?” was Edward’s answer. “God keep you, honest Tom, and let us hope for a happy meeting anon.”

So the brothers parted—Tom to pursue his way to the residence of the Clerk of the Acts, Edward to join company with some friends who were to see him to Gravesend on his way to France.

Tom Browne presented himself at Pepys’ residence in Seething Lane, Crutched Friars, somewhere about noon, and sent up his letter by a servant, who eyed him from head to foot, but silently departed on his mission.

Tom soon heard a woman’s voice at the head of the stairs.

“Say that your master is at his office, and bid the bearer wait his pleasure. Some beggar, I’ll warrant.”

The man was heard to mutter that the bearer did not look of that sort, and was well dressed.

"Aye, then," said the lady, "bid him walk up, and I'll soon find out his business."

The man came half-way down the dark staircase, and, beckoning Tom, said:

"My mistress will see you."

Tom ascended the stairs, and there, in her own sitting-room, stood Mistress Pepys. Her curiosity had got the better of her prudence, and when Tom entered she had broken the seal of the letter, and was reading the contents.

"The son of Dr. Thomas Browne : at your service, sir. My husband will be in to dine ere long. Prythee do us the honour to sit at our humble board. I hope you leave your father well, and your good mother ? "

As the lady was speaking, Tom was looking at her ; and she was examining him. Both impressions were favourable. Mistress Pepys was very round and fair, with a certain amount of coquettish manner which was the fashion of the women of the time. She wore her hair in short curls on her white forehead, bound by a band of ribbon. Her gown was of black velvet with white sleeves and kerchief, which was a kind of complimentary mourning for her

brother-in-law, Pepys' brother Tom, who had died the week before.

Mistress Pepys had been very unwilling to put on black, for she, like her husband, dearly loved finery and light colours; but Mr. Samuel Pepys was a great stickler as to etiquette, and would not have allowed his wife to neglect the outward sign of woe.

Before Tom Browne had been ten minutes in Mistress Pepys' company he had heard more town gossip than he had ever heard before.

"My husband has had much to trouble him from the death of his brother, and methinks, what with private and public matters, he is to be pitied. For my part, I think they might be proud to have such a servant. But the Duke takes mightily to him, the Duke of York," she explained, "and is ever seeking his advice and leaning on his judgment. Wives come but poorly off when the public is put afore them, and that's the truth. But wives are not of much account now. Her Majesty could tell a tale an' she chose. As you have heard, my Lady Castlemaine rules His Majesty, and—— But I forgot," Mistress Pepys said, with a show of prudence, "I am no scandal-monger, and can't abide to hear how the folks talk. Have you a wife, sir?"

"Nay, indeed, I have no wife, nor like to have. There is time enow."

"Well, maybe ; I was wed at fifteen, though there was a mighty fuss raised about it, as my folks," with a toss of her head, "were a nobler stock than my husband's. But we've never repented ourselves, and we are both young enow and happy enow, if this fearsome plague don't take us. There's a deal of sickness abroad, Master Browne ; have you any fear on't ?"

"Nay, indeed," said Tom, "I fear nought. Moreover, I am joining the fleet, which errand has brought me hither. My father deemed it wise of me to see the chief in these matters, as all the world knows Mr. Pepys to be."

This compliment pleased the wife, who, after all was said, was really devoted to her husband, who took her to the play when she wished, and was unsparing in adorning her, if the said adornment fell in with his own views of what was fitting.

"Yes, and you are right there ; no man standeth higher with the Duke and my Lord Sandwich, whom you must know is a kinsman of mine, or—— Methinks I hear Sam's voice," and Mistress Pepys tripped to the door and soon returned, saying, "Yes, it is my husband ; he is in some fuss about a neglect

of Biggs, his servant, and must give him a scolding afore he comes up. One scolding in a day is enow so I shall come off scot-free let's hope."

Then the little laugh followed, and shaking of the fair curls, and a glance at a small mirror, as Mistress Pepys settled her kerchief, and vowed to herself, though not to Tom, that after all, black was not ill-becoming to people blessed like herself with a fair skin.

And now there came the great man himself, fussy but courteous, dressed in the suit of mourning which was considered the "right thing" for his brother.

He took up the letter which his wife had opened, and scanning its contents, assured Tom that he was right glad to see the son of so distinguished a man.

"And, moreover, I have heard your name as one of the best spoken of officers on H.M.S. 'Fore-sight.' Sir Robert Brookes has told me of you, and of the good words spoken of you by his brother Captain Brookes. And now look you, sir, you are in the nick of time, I have to wait on His Grace the Duke of York at three of the clock to-day. I will carry you thither, and so well do I know the mind of His Grace, that I'll present you forthwith to him, and if he seeth with my eyes, (God grant though they be stronger

than mine!) he will give you a commission under him when the fleet is prepared. We are moving heaven and earth to fit out the fleet, and if we don't succeed and drive the Dutch into a corner, my name is not Sam Pepys, aye, sir: what do you say?"

"I say, sir, 'amen' to that latter part, and I say I am indeed beholden to you for your good offices, as my father will be."

"That's well said. And now, good wife, I hope you have seen to the viands; and hasten the servants: that fellow below is a blockhead, he hath allowed my new mourning cloak to get an ugly stain; and for my part I think it is ruined. Forsooth, I sometimes say that we had as lief betake ourselves to our first humble home in Axe Yard with our good handmaid, Jane, as live on here with the lazy good-for-nothings who eat at our board and kick their heels for pastime. My new cloak cost a pretty sum, I'll warrant, and now it's scarce fit for a beggar."

"May be," said Mistress Pepys, as she left the room, "you'll be more pitiful to me the next time my lace ruffles are caught in the fastening of your doublet and torn to rags!" With this parting thrust and a toss of her pretty head, Mistress Pepys departed to look after her domestic duties.

Tom found the Clerk of the Acts a most amusing

companion, and before dinner was served he was entirely dispossessed of the idea that Mr. Pepys was formidable or one to fear. If he could scarcely help laughing, and was secretly amused, at the jumble of grave and gay, serious and foolish topics, all which he discussed so glibly, Tom was also struck with the vein of honourable feeling which ran through all he said on public matters. Jobbery and sales of places were contemptible in his eyes, and he seemed heartily glad to have it in his power to bring the brave young sailor to the notice of the Duke of York.

"We have need of brave, good men now," he said; "there is such a jostling and over-reaching of one another, such petty paltry jealousies, and such giving of places out of favour to poor mean scoundrels, that the worthy son of a worthy father may well be welcome as the servant of the king. It is queer to note it all, and to feel how the plague is stealing on step by step. Why, sir, in six hours it may be all over with any one of us. When that fearsome sickness lays its grip on a man, it heeds not whether it be prince or peasant; and there are some in high places ill-fitted to go before the Judge. I have only t'other day laid my brother in the grave, and the trouble I had to get him placed by his

mother's side—so little account are our bones, sir,—that because I had a bit of silver ready, the gravemaker said he'd jostle the rest together, so that he would make room for my brother to lie where I bid him. And, methought, these 'others' he was to jostle, were as dear to their mothers, who are dead and gone, as poor Tom was to me. It was as good a burying as I could give him. But what is a burying to the dead? thought I. There were near one hundred and fifty to follow the corpse, and all entertained by me, with six biscuits apiece and burnt claret. My Cousin Joyce Weston saw to that, and Mistress Holden sorted the men and women, some in one room and some in another, all finding space enough. My mourning cloak was the handsomest I could get, and alack to have it ruined, as I said before! But we must away to dinner, for it would be ill policy not to be in good time at Whitehall. It does vex me sorely about that cloak, for I would have fain worn it. But as we shall ride in my coach, sir, methinks it may pass unnoticed."

And, indeed, as Tom Browne rode with his new patron towards Whitehall, he thought Mistress Pepys had been right, when she said—

"The stain was no bigger than a crown-piece, and it was most like that he spilled some burnt claret on it himself, and that none else were to blame."

"Methinks you must instruct me, sir," Tom Browne said, as the coach made slow progress, as all coaches did in those days. "You must instruct me as to my behaviour in the presence of the Duke."

"I will do so shortly," said the good Clerk of the Acts, pleased to be consulted on matters of etiquette.

"I see you have a brave cap, though the plume be an inch or so short for the fashion. Carry it lightly on the back of your left hand and leave the right free. See that you walk behind me at the distance of some few yards, then when I name you to the Duke, advance more quickly, bend on your right knee, and bow your head. He will, or I'm much mistaken, bid you rise, and say kindly words. Then I will open out your wish to take office under him in the squadron, and you, if asked, humbly state your service aboard the 'Foresight' under that gallant and brave Captain Brookes."

They were not far from Whitehall, when they saw a crowd rushing wildly through the street, and a man crying aloud :

"The Plague ! the Plague ! two deaths since noon ! a certain cure ! a certain cure and preventive !"

"He is hawking some vile potion or nostrum," said Samuel Pepys, "I doubt not, to take some pence out

of these poor wretches' pockets. But, Lord, where there is smoke there must be fire, and I'll be sending my wife into the country afore she's a week older."

"What saith your good father of the Plague?"

"It has not come nigh Norwich yet," Tom said, "nor hath he spoken much of it, though I have heard him propound many a time the truth, that good living and wholesome food best protect a man from disease."

They were drawn up before Whitehall now, and Tom Browne, alighting from the coach, followed his patron up the wide staircase to the apartment of the Duke. A number of attendants were gathered on the first landing, and the first gentleman of the party signed to Mr. Pepys and Tom to stand back, for her Majesty was passing down, on her way to the Park.

Tom Browne had thus an opportunity of looking at the pale, sad face of Queen Catherine, who was just then accepting her fate as an injured and forsaken wife, and resigning herself to make the best of it, and bear it with what patience she could summon to her aid.

Sympathy and interest in her grief are not generally felt or expressed for Catherine of Braganza. But few women deserve pity more than she did. She might not be a woman of great attractions, either of

mind or person, but her position was one of peculiar trial. She came to England to be Queen Consort to a king who was on the very crest of the wave of popularity and almost mad royalty. The nation was beside itself with delight, and everywhere the most enthusiastic reception awaited him and the woman he had chosen to share his throne. How short-lived all this rapture was we all know. The name of King very soon seemed all that was left to the people, who had forgotten old grievances and party strife to welcome the son of the monarch, whom a cruel death had raised to the very pinnacle of martyrdom. Full of promise, and brimming over with good-nature, Charles the Second came to be, as the people thought, their deliverer from an iron yoke—their saviour from the dominion of the usurper and his puritanical doctrines and practices. Like the morning cloud and early dew, these hopes faded. At this very time dissatisfaction was rife; the Triennial Parliament was the great bone of contention, and the king showed himself by no means willing to bow to the just law of the land. He was good-natured and ready to court popularity when it cost him nothing, nor compromised his own selfish aims and personal indulgence. But the liberty of the subject was of far less importance than his own

gratification, and he plunged into all excess and immoralities with a high hand.

To the certainty of this, his queen had soon to awake, and make up her mind to endure or to resist.

That she chose the former course might be partly due to her want of spirit and strength of character, and partly to what none have attempted to deny, her love for the king. She is not the only woman who has borne much, rather than create a public scandal, and have her woes made the food for hungry gossip.

When the ladies had passed down the staircase, Samuel Pepys, making due reverence, which Tom imitated, they were ushered into the presence of the Duke of York. He was seated at a table with a pile of papers and charts before him. Lord Sandwich and others were with him, engaged in consultation as to the equipment of the fleet. Money was the difficulty, and money was not forthcoming from the people, as the King expected.

Tom Browne felt his awe vanish as he saw the kindly, good-tempered face of the Duke, who had just adopted a large peruke, and had shaved off his own dark heavy curls.

He smiled upon Mr. Pepys, and nodded when he

introduced Tom Browne, who, obedient to instructions, kept well in the background.

"What do you say, Master Pepys? A youngster who has served in the 'Foresight.' His name an' it please you?"

"He is Mr. Thomas Browne, son of the learned author of—of—a very learned book, which brought an answer from Sir Kenelm Digby."

Lord Sandwich laughed, and said: "I know the book, and your grace knows it also—the 'Religio Medici.'"

"Tut, tut, my lord; I cannot go into these matters now. Come forward, sir; sure I have heard your name from Captain Brookes. Well, and you want a commission to serve under me? Do you think you can give a fat Dutchman his deserts, eh?"

"I'll never turn my back on him till he has got it, your grace," said Tom firmly.

"You are but a youngster—twenty years old, or not so much?"

"Yes, my lord Duke, I have all but reached my twenty-first year."

"Well, you speak well, and I doubt not you'll fight well. You like the salt water and don't shake at a few squalls, I'll warrant. You can make out his commission, Mr. Clerk of the Acts, and I'll keep my

weather-eye open, that the youngster has as good a berth as may be. Eh! my Lord Sandwich?"

"As it pleases your Grace," was the answer; and then Mr. Pepys signified to Tom Browne that his interview was at an end.

Tom made his reverence, and backed out of the room, a process which he had previously noticed a young man effect with an ease and grace he could not rival; and then he went to the "Green Dragon" to prepare for his departure.



A GREAT VICTORY.

THE summer sun was shining on the quaint houses in Norwich Market Place, when on the morning of the 4th of June, a messenger galloped along the rough stones to the Guild Hall.

"Haste—post haste!" being written on a despatch he held firmly in his hand. As the crowd followed him, helter-skelter up Gaol Hill, he shouted—

"A victory! a victory!"

And then, exhausted with the rapidity of his journey from Lowestoft, he fell forwards in the saddle, and was caught by one of the men-at-arms by the door, or he would have fallen from the horse, which was prancing, with dilated nostrils, and wildly prominent eyes, in as exhausted a condition as his master.

"News, news!—oyez, oyez!" cried the crowd, as they separated to allow the Mayor to pass through.

The despatch was addressed to the "Right

Worshipful the Mayor, and Corporation of the Ancient City and County of Norwich."

Just as the Mayor was beginning to read aloud the contents of the despatch, to the assembled citizens, the crowd parted again, and a well-known figure, in the plain, closely-fitting vest and loose cloak hanging over the right shoulder, walked up to the Mayor.

"A victory, Doctor," said the Mayor. "A victory, and here is a name mentioned, you will, methinks, be proud to hear."

Dr. Thomas Browne removed his hat, and stood by the Mayor's side, bareheaded, as he read in a loud voice :

"By these presents, I inform the subjects of His Gracious Majesty King Charles the Second, living in the city and county of Norwich, that a great victory has been gained over his enemies the Dutch.

"The vessels under command of Opdam, were routed ; those under command of His Highness the Duke of York'—here the crowd broke into enthusiastic cheering, for the sailor Prince was a favourite with the people—'under command of His Highness the Duke of York, the Prince Rupert, and my Lord Sandwich, are riding at anchor off Yarmouth, in safety. The enemy lost four of their admirals, seven thousand men, and eighteen ships.'" The cheers

here became deafening, and the Mayor held up his hand.

“Hear the remainder, good folk. There is a name following you well know.

“‘Many of the men of His Majesty’s ships distinguished themselves right well. Amongst the Norwich men stands first, Thomas Browne, the son of the Norwich physician.’”

The cheers of the people grew more and more vehement, and the father of the young hero, when he could get a hearing, said—

“Good folk, I thank you ; I am a proud father of a gallant son. You must let me haste to tell his mother.”

The doctor’s voice faltered, and descending from the steps, he made his way, the crowd standing respectfully aside to let him pass.

The news of the victory had reached the Doctor’s house, and he found his wife and daughters, with two or three of the little ones, gathered round Jonas, who had been the first to make out what the noise in the Market Place meant.

“Tom was in the action !” Mistress Browne exclaimed ; “is their aught heard of him ?”

“Aye, verily, good wife ; yes, sweet Moll, thy young brother’s name is in the despatch as one

who has kept his word, and fought well for king and country."

"As I knew he would," Moll exclaimed, "brave honest Tom!"

"Ah, husband," exclaimed Mistress Browne, "let us thank God for His goodness."

"Amen, dear wife," said the Doctor.

"Father," said Moll, "sure we should let Amphyllis hear the news."

"Aye, that is well said. I am riding that way in the coach. I will drop you at the cottage, Moll."

"Oh! kind father," exclaimed Moll; "that is what I would like above all things."

"Tom himself will not be slow to come with his news, and he can get leave. But may be they will follow up this victory with another battle till we ratify the peace on our own terms."

Amphyllis Windham had found life somewhat tame since the spring days when she had first tasted the sweets of what lay beyond and apart from her daily routine.

This had not changed in any great extent. Her father was still hovering on the borderland which separates the seeming from the real. The same delusions haunted him; but the Doctor's hand withheld from him the full use of drams and spirits, and the

furious paroxysms which had been so fearful to those about him were less frequent, and when they did occur, less violent than formerly. Still the same amount of watching was necessary; and Bridget went patiently and quietly on her way, making no complaint, while it was evident to every one that Amphyllis was restless and disinclined to do what was necessary, where before she had been always ready to relieve Bridget and Joan, and undertake more rather than less of the work her father's condition brought upon the little household at the cottage.

Andrew Whitelock saw the change in Amphyllis, and thought he attributed it to its true cause, when he said that Tom Browne had played fast and loose with her heart, and she was pining for him and the gay world.

For the gay world Amphyllis might be longing, but she did not feel sure of herself with regard to Tom. Mr. Howard's courtly grace of manner, Hal Bendish's open flattery, the evident sensation which she had made had driven "honest Tom" a little into the background. It had been pleasant enough to receive his attentions when there were no others at hand. But she did not care to think of herself as in any way tied to him. Had he not expressly said

that was far from his wish ? Andrew watched her **with** a kind of wistful, tender interest which was **touching**. His stern manner had relaxed towards **her**. Finding his words of no avail, he said little, **and** except for the special mention of her when he **prayed** his long prayers in the family, she might have **thought** that he had given up trying to convert her.

There is always something ennobling in true love, and Andrew Whitelock's love for Amphyllis was as **much** a part of himself as his creed. The spirit of self-sacrifice was in both alike, and he kept down all signs of his love, and only constituted himself Amphyllis's protector.

Sometimes, almost in spite of herself, Amphyllis would listen to his burning words of eloquent appeal when a few chosen ones from Cringleford met in the little outbuilding which Andrew had turned into a small meeting-house. Many would stand at the door, eager to catch his words, and Mistress Howse at the Mill was one of those whom he had converted.

On this bright June day, when summer was in her early prime, Amphyllis had gone down to the Mill, and had stopped, as she often did, on the little narrow bridge which spanned the stream, to listen to the thud, thud of the big wheel, and watch the diamond drops it threw from its moss-grown sides

as it turned round with the same monotonous dull sound ; round and round, ever the same.

"Like my life," the girl thought. "Just broken for a few short, fair days, then on and on, the same thing—always the same. It was all very well for Bridget and Joan, but not for her." Then she reproached herself for grumbling at her lot, and turned with a sweet smile to greet the miller's wife, who came across the well-kept garden to meet her.

"A fair morning, forsooth. This is like the summer was when I was a girl. How is poor father?"

"Quiet to-day, and I think he is getting stronger. Bridget bid me ask you if you could spare four pullet's eggs. Our hens have not laid an egg between them for a week."

"Brooding, no doubt, child. But hast thou heard the news—great news?"

"No," Amphyllis said, in a listless way. "News—what news?"

"Why of a great victory off Lowestoft. The carter was in Norwich with the flour, and heard a great noise round the Guild Hall. Ah, deary me! when will they beat the sword into ploughshares? I've seen a deal too much of fighting in my time—brother against brother, hewing and hacking one another, and shooting their own kith and kin to the

heart. It seems but t'other day that news came of the battle of Edgehill, and the King thought to carry all his own way, but the sword of the Lord and Gideon was too strong for 'em. What a blessed young man your cousin be, for dividing rightly the word of truth! I wish all the poor creatures who are sitting in darkness could but hear him. I was right glad to see you sitting there last evening."

"Oh," said Amphyllis, "I'd as lief hear Andrew discourse as do nothing. It's mighty dull in the cottage, with poor father mooning and moaning; and dearly as I love him, I find it irksome at times. But about the victory, Mistress Howse."

"Ah, about the victory!" It was Mary Browne's voice. She had come down from the cottage to find Amphyllis, and had followed her and Mistress Howse to the back premises where the hens' nests were to be found.

"The victory is a great one," Moll said, "and, Amphyllis, Tom's name is mentioned with honour. Father brought me along in the coach that I might be the first to tell you the news. Are you not glad? Oh, I am so proud to think I have a brother like Tom!"

"Aye, aye, he is a brave young gentleman," said Mistress Howse, as she stooped over the nests, and parting the straw, took out gently and carefully, one

by one, the four rounded eggs, warm and purely white. "Aye, aye, he is a brave young gentleman; but I pray he may be fighting the enemies of the Lord in his own heart, for we are all alike troubled with them: as good Master Andrew sayeth, our poor hearts are a nest of unclean birds."

Moll had linked her arm through her friend's, and said, "I am come to spend an hour or two with you. Father is gone on to Drayton, where there is much sickness."

Mistress Howse caught the word "sickness."

"Dearie! have you heard that there's the worst sickness of all in Norwich? Folks are beginning to be affrighted about their bodies anent the Plague: if only they were as affrighted anent their souls!"

"Father has said nothing of the Plague yet," Moll rejoined. "It is to be warded off by cleanly ways and the wearing of flannel next the skin."

"Warded off! I wish you may find it so. My sister's children are all a-clamouring for us to take 'em in at the Mill; but I keep no hostel, as I said t'other day. Well, good-morning to you, and may the Lord open your eyes!"

The two girls turned away, and Amphyllis said—

"Mistress Howse is grown very contrary of late. Time was when she liked news as well as any, and

would tell me tales of her youth and of her pranks with the young gentlefolks at Drayton Manor ; and now it's all preachment, thanks to Andrew."

"Poor old soul! Methinks, Amphyllis, we may need more preachment than we know of; but let us talk about Tom. Father's heart is filled with triumph, mother's with thankfulness; as for me, I feel as if I trod on air. To serve under the Duke and get mention in the despatch is something to make one glad one has a brother so honoured!"

Amphyllis did not reply, and Moll said—

"Dear! you know how Tom loves you. He would give his life for you—so he said."

"Yes," Amphyllis said, "so he said in March; but this is June, and he has consorted with royal folk since then. Mayhap, he has forgot me."

"Nay, Tom is not one of that light sort. Hal Bendish might forget in a month or a day; but Tom—never! Honest Tom, as father calls him, with such pride; but mother says to-day, 'Gallant, brave Tom' are the right terms to use, and father answered, 'Well, then, dear wife, doth not honest comprehend the whole? for none can be really good or brave if he be not honest.'"

Amphyllis sighed. She was leaning over the parapet of the little bridge, watching the rippling water.

"Ah, I know he is very good," she said, "but, Moll, I want to be free yet awhile. I would dearly love to be at the court, and——"

"The court! Nay, Amphyllis, methinks none would fare better for being about the court. It saddens me somewhat to hear you speak thus."

Amphyllis turned suddenly, and threw her arm round Moll's neck.

"Dear Moll, whatever betides, mind, I *love you*, and I wish I were like you, as good and as honest. There now, Moll, be not hard in judging me."

Moll shook her head.

"Nay, who could be hard on anyone in judging you?" as the fair face was turned to her, and those lovely eyes, with fringes on which tears were hanging, sought Moll's with a pathetic earnestness.

"I feel two selves in me, Moll," Amphyllis said; "and when I show the bad one, you must promise to believe the good one is there also. Tell him—tell your brother—to believe it, if I never see him again."

Then Moll went on to tell Amphyllis of all her own little interests, and how her mother had been very uneasy about little Prue, one of the younger children, and that her father had taken her in his arms and walked about with her to soothe her, just

as any father might do, who had not been at the beds of sick folks all day, and at his books and various experiments half the night.

"I sometimes think," Moll went on, "that our father is the most wonderful man alive, and in our home he is, as mother saith, the real *house band*, and holds us all together, not by force, or by any strength, save the strength of wisdom and love."

"Yes," Amphyllis said, "I know you are the happiest folks that could be found. I wish—oh! how I wish I was in your place—one of you."

"So you will be when you are Tom's wife," Moll said.

"Hush now, prythee, Moll! Wife! Wife! I do not care to be a wife yet. And as to your brother, well, I like him well enow. But there, hark! is the coach coming along the road and stopping at the gate."

The Doctor descended from the high step with his accustomed quiet deliberation, and greeted the two girls with his cheerful voice, adding :

"Hast heard the good news, Amphyllis, of the victory, and all who played a good part in it?"

"Yes," said Amphyllis, demurely; "Mistress Howse at the Mill told me."

"And Moll was not silent, I'll warrant," said the

Doctor, chucking his daughter under the chin, "Well, shall I see your father, Amphyllis?"

"If it please you, sir; and I will lead the way."

The Doctor followed Amphyllis up the stairs, and found her poor father seated at a table, covered with all kinds of instruments and liquids in glasses."

"Ah, Doctor," he said, "I have been very near it—very near. When I discover that, I make my fortune.

"That alchemist secret, you know!—the secret! If only those wretches had not practised the black art on me. If only——"

"Nay, do not deal with 'ifs,'" said the Doctor. "I counsel you, Master Windham, to put away those bottles, and take a turn in the sweet summer air, in the pleasance. Have you finished the bottle of physic?"

"Every drop. I want more," was the reply.

All the time they had been speaking, Dr. Browne had his eyes fixed on the wan, eager face before him. His fingers now sought the attenuated wrist. He said no more about the condition of the patient, but told him of the victory over the Dutch, and of his own joy. He always tried to divert the morbid fancies of the sick man by cheerful conversation. But Master Windham's mind wandered, and he began to babble about the black art, and the elixir of life, and

the wretch whom he had cursed, in one confused murmur.

The Doctor put his hand on Amphyllis's shoulder as they stood together outside the room.

"He is weaker in body and mind since I saw him last," the Doctor said; "it is scarcely likely he will be here long, but there is no certainty."

"Poor father!" Amphyllis said, her eyes filling with tears, "poor father. It is a sad life indeed; nor need we care greatly to keep him in it."

"God's time is the right time," said the Doctor solemnly. "The great thing is to have him quiet, and to keep the drams away. We will see you ere long, I trust; and now, Moll, we must away."

Amphyllis and Moll exchanged a formal kiss, and then the Doctor's high coach rolled off, and Amphyllis went into the kitchen, for Bridget was at the market, and only Joan was at home.

Joan was hot in the face with boiling down some gooseberries for jam. The great wood fire was blazing up the open chimney, and the heat was oppressive.

"Pheugh!" exclaimed Amphyllis, "I cannot breathe; its enow to choke me."

"Breathe! aye, you can breathe easy enow when gadding about. Tell you what, Amphyllis Windham,

you be always a hankering after high game. You ain't the same girl you were ; you are set up, and peacocky airs don't go down with me. Never a helping hand all the blessed morning ; and the pasty is burnt, and the gooseberry conserve will be burnt too if I quit the spoon, and I am like to drop," and Joan passed one of her bare arms over her forehead, while with the other she still continued to stir the seething mass in the iron pot.

"I'm very sorry," Amphyllis said gently ; "here, I'll take the ladle now."

"No, that you won't ; your butter fingers will be burnt an' you touch it. Folks that are made to live in glass cases ain't the ones to stand over a furnace, they'd melt away. If you must be doing somewhat, take the broth off the trivet, and strew some marigold leaves in it, and carry a basin up to the poor man above stairs."

Amphyllis did as she was bid, and soon carried a tempting bowl of soup, with bread cut into thin slices, to her father.

He looked up and greeted her, as he often did, with :

"Ah ! dear wife, I'm close on the secret now ; then we will defy the power of the old she-devil, who——"

He passed his hand over his forehead, and as Amphyllis kissed him, the cloud passed.

"Here is your broth, dear father. Shall I feed you?"

"Ah! you are a good child. I see now, you are little Amphyllis." Then he took two spoonfuls from her hand, and then turned away his head. "I think I'll lie down, Amphyllis; I am tired, and it is getting dark. Where is Andrew?"

"He is gone to Thetford to-day dear father," Amphyllis said, as she helped her father to the bed.

"There, that is comfortable; that is good; rest is good at night. Good-night, dear, good-night."

Amphyllis was frightened at her father's strange manner. The June sunshine was streaming into the low casement window, and the boughs of the honeysuckle which climbed round it were making flickering shadows on the floor; and yet her father repeated dreamily: "It is getting dark; good-night; good-night."

Bridget coming in from the market an hour later, thought the house very quiet. She looked into the parlour, but no Amphyllis was there; and into the kitchen, but only Joan was to be seen, making her gooseberries safe in large brown pipkins.

"Enough to last for years," Bridget thought; but, afraid of offending Joan, she only asked:

"Where is Mistress Amphyllis?"

"Upstairs ; and the best place for her," was the short answer.

Bridget laid aside her heavily-laden basket and cloak, and, hot and tired as she was, went upstairs.

The bells of St. Peter Mancroft were ringing a joy peal, which came borne on the light summer air, as Bridget opened the door of the bedroom.

Amphyllis held up her hand, saying :

"Hush ! he is asleep."

But one glance and Bridget saw that Hal Windham slept the sleep that knows no waking.

The next few days were shrouded in gloom and sadness. Amphyllis was overcome with the remorseful grief of early youth. That she might have done more for her poor brain-struck father was the prominent feeling—not what she had done the last few weeks. Ever since the March gale had blown her towards the great physician's house, she felt there had been a change in her. All kinds of visions had filled her head, and she had, sometimes, if disturbed from indulging them, been impatient, and would answer her father's oft-repeated moans and complainings with a sharpness which was new to her.

Tom Browne's love was pleasant, and she loved him in the way which is so common. She was

pleased and proud to have taken his heart by storm ; so pleased to feel that she was perfect in his eyes, and she felt a throb of pride in his late honours, and a sort of possession in him that was a secret spring of joy. But there had been no whole-hearted surrender of herself to him, irrespective of all other considerations. Such love in the first flush of youth and beauty is all but impossible to natures like Amphyllis Windham's. She wanted more than Tom Browne could give her, though what that "more" implied could hardly be defined. Jewels and fine things, and grand houses, and that dim vision of the court, of music and dancing, and brilliant talk sweetened with flattery like Hal Brendish's, or still better gracefully implied compliments like the courtly Mr. Howard's.

Poor child ! She sat mute and sad through the long dreary week which followed her father's death, and what with self-reproach and sorrow of heart, and the fading away of her beautiful visions, she was hopelessly miserable and sad.

Then Andrew came back and prayed, and exhorted all there who came to the house of mourning to prepare for the summons which might be very near for them.

Andrew's creed invested Death with gloom and darkness. To him it was the King of Terrors ; and

though he loved Amphyllis, as I have said, with the deepest affection, he thought it his duty to speak much to her of the worm that would soon feed on her as on the rest of the world ; that youth and beauty could not protect her from the universal doom, and, in short, he wrapped her round with the shadows of the valley, and she could see no light beyond.

The days seemed interminable. The shutters closed, the footfall of those who came out of curiosity or respect to look upon the dead, hushed and stealthy. And Amphyllis sat by the coffin, and listened to Andrew's words, till the very spring of youth seemed to dry up within her.

In the kitchen, Bridget and Joan were busy with the preparations of funeral cake and other dishes, which custom demanded should be ready for bearers and friends.

Of the latter, poor Mr. Windham had very few, but one or two of his old acquaintances signified their intention of coming over to the funeral, and it was thought a " mark of respect " to the Whitelocks to attend it, and a long procession turned out of the gates of Ford End Cottage when the body of Henry Windham was laid in the quiet churchyard.

In her long mourning cloak and hood, Amphyllis walked first as chief mourner, and many eyes were

dim with tears as she threw herself on the grass by the open grave, and wept the passionate tears of youthful grief.

The old clergyman of the parish read the beautiful service of the Church, which was, perhaps, at this time, more soothing to the ear than it had ever been before ; it had been banished for so long, with many other good things, from the religious observances of the Puritans. But Andrew was not likely to let the opportunity pass, he broke forth into a long extemporary address and prayer, till some of the assembly fidgeted, and a few even yawned audibly, while the faithful responded with groans and amens. For undoubtedly this young apostle carried great weight with his ministrations.

"Would it never be over?" Amphyllis thought. Would the time never come when she might go home and be alone?"

But the ceremonial was not over when they turned away from the church. The little cottage was filled with guests, and burnt claret and a particular sort of funeral biscuit were freely dispensed. Then more preaching and more prayers from Andrew, and at last the house was quiet, and Amphyllis was free to go up to her little chamber and throw herself on the bed to sleep the sleep of utter exhaustion of mind and body.

On that very day of radiant summer the young hero of the great victory over the Dutch came home.

The mansion in the Market Place was thronged with friends and relations. There was a succession of meals, which might be called dinner or supper, as the case might be. The Doctor's board was always plentifully spread, and his cellar well stocked. Mistress Dorothy was always ready at a pinch, and having the wheels of her household machinery well oiled, they could be set in motion at any given moment.

"To see the frankness and yet the modesty where-with our Tom bears his honours, is enow to make one's heart swell with joy," Mistress Browne said to the Doctor that evening. "Methinks half the youngsters' heads in the city would be turned by the crowds of grand folks who have come hither to-day; but Tom takes it all as modestly as if he had done no more than shoot a wild duck on the broads. It is nothing," said he: "he must have been a craven, indeed, who did not stand to his gun, when led by such a hero as His Highness the Duke."

"Aye," said the Doctor; "but, good wife, it amazes me somewhat that you should feel any sort of wonder at honest Tom's bearing. It is in tune

with his whole life. There is no discord there. Depend upon it, good Dorothy, that the brave, honest man does not come to courage all on a sudden. He that recoils in little things will recoil in great. He that can bare his breast to the shafts of ridicule, because perchance he will not swerve or turn from the right way, will not flinch from a gun-shot or a sabre cut. But I have heard to-day from Mr. Colt, who had it from an eye-witness, that a young sailor was lying wounded by the gunwale, and that under the hottest fire, our Tom walked as cool to the spot as if he were walking up to his bed at home, and bending, raised the boy in his arms to carry him beyond reach of the fire. But the poor lad screamed that he was hurting him sore, and struggled, and Tom could scarce hold him ; and the bullets whizzed like hail, and yet Tom would not give in, and bore the lad yet struggling below, and gave him into the surgeon's hands, and was aloft again before a word could be said. But there was a great cheer as Tom went back to his post, and the Duke shouted to ask wherefore, and when he heard it, he said : "That youngster has stuff in him which makes God's heroes. The lion's heart and the woman's tenderness mingled. May he prosper, as a gallant youth should !"

"Oh, dear husband! that is the best news of all; we must see to it that Ned hears it. Doth Moll know?"

"Moll? I know not; but where are Tom and Moll? I missed them when we rose from dinner."

"They are gone together for some talk. Methinks it is not hard to guess on what theme. Hast seen the poor child Amphyllis to-day?"

"Nay, I was too hurried to go to the funeral; she was grief-struck yesterday. We must have her with us, dear wife, and comfort her. If Tom loves her, she must e'en be dear to us."

"Yes, that is true," Mistress Browne said; "but I should feel more drawn to the child, did I deem it certain she loves our son; but I have misgivings. Will she continue to live at Ford End Cottage, think you?"

"That depends on the view Andrew Whitelock takes," said the Doctor; "he may not choose to retain her other than his wife, and to that she will never consent."

"His wife! Andrew desire to marry that little beauty, who loves the fine things of the world, and cares for soft flattering speeches, more than I can think well! Nay, dear husband, I would not entertain such a thought."

The Doctor laughed.

"Didst never hear that opposing forces are sometimes attracted the one towards the other? Nay, Dorothy, there is no law in love or war. But I must away to my Lady Maidstone, who is sickening with some malady."

"Not the dreadful malady, not the fearsome Plague?"

"I cannot tell. It is in our city for certain, in the low streets down by Pockthorpe and St. Faith; but I would keep down panic and terror as long as I can, for these last have killed as many as the Plague, methinks. Say nothing of this to the children, sweetheart."

"I am thinking of *you*, dear husband," Mistress Browne said. "You will not go anear it, if you can help it?"

"Nay, look not so pale, Dorothy," the Doctor said, "and affrighted. The physician hath a charmed life, and there are words in Homer which I would fain give to you, if I can render them aright, spoken by the great Hector to poor, tearful Andromache :

' Afflict me not, dear wife, with these vain griefs :
Once born, the best must die.'

It seems to me, more and more, that death is not so

greatly to be feared, since it cometh to all alike. And as it cometh from the Fountain of Life, sure, like our birth, in which we take no part, it must be good."

Then, with a kiss, the Doctor went on his way.



TWO HEROES.

TOWARDS evening Amphyllis roused herself, and washing the traces of tears from her face, went downstairs. Bridget, worn out with her exertions, was sleeping, seated upright on one of the straight-backed chairs in the parlour, her head against the wall. In the kitchen Joan was clearing away the platters and cups, and singing to herself, in a low monotone, a mournful strain, which was as she thought, suited to the occasion. When Amphyllis came in, she stopped her scouring of a large tankard for a minute, and exclaimed :

“Dear heart ! you look like any ghost. What did you come down for, eh ?”

“I felt lonely,” Amphyllis said, “and everything was so quiet—as quiet as death.”

“Poor thing ! poor child ! Here, sit down, and let me give you a drop of burnt claret and a biscuit.”

Joan placed Amphyllis on a settle by the fire, and gave her an old box turned upside down, for her

feet, and then busied herself in preparing a little refreshment for her.

The hunger of youth, for Amphyllis had touched no food that day, prevailed, and she rejoiced Joan's heart by eating what she gave her, and sipping the burnt claret to the last drop in the mug.

"There, and now you'll be better! You must not fret for poor father. I've had my losses, as you know, and I say to myself, 'It's *over* for them, and it's to come for me, and we've all got to lie down and die.'"

"It's not the lying down, nor the pain, that is so dreadful," Amphyllis said, shuddering. "It's the going we know not whither; it's the darksome grave——"

And a voice close behind her said, in a low, sonorous tone, "'O, Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?'"

It was Andrew's voice, and coming round to the front of Amphyllis's chair, he said:

"Come out into the garden. The air is sweet, and there is a moon just rising over the trees. Come."

Amphyllis obeyed, and then with unwonted gentleness, Andrew spoke to her of life and death, and things present and *things to come*, all belonging to those who are Christ's, for Christ's is God's. "I would have you to be Christ's, Amphyllis, and then I can

leave you with less fear ; for I am going to be absent for some time ; perhaps, for ever."

"Going !—whither ? "

"I have heard to-day of sore sickness in the low parts of the city. My place is there to preach repentance and forgiveness ere it be too late. I shall refrain from returning to this house until the Plague is stayed, lest by any means I should bring the deadly poison to you, or my sister. It may be long, it may be short ; but long or short, you are to call this house *home*. If I go to death, it is only what thousands have done before me, and it may be that I shall smooth the pillows of the dying, ere I lay down my own head. It is the will of the Lord that I should go, and I leave life and death in His hands."

As Andrew spoke, the moon, coming up over the highest boughs of the elms, shone on his face. There was no harshness there now ; no hard, uncompromising lines round his finely chiselled mouth. An indescribable sweetness seemed shed over it, mingled with a resolute, determined courage.

"I count not my life dear," he said, half to himself and half to Amphyllis.

Something about her cousin affected her strangely. All his long and earnest exhortations to her, as to vanity and self-pleasing ; all his hard judgments

as to the dress and light-bearing of others ; all his efforts to convert her by pronouncing every beautiful thing of the earth earthy, and calling on her to renounce them—had never touched her as this brave determination to go into the plague-stricken districts of Norwich did, as he said, "Counting not his life dear."

She drew closer to him, and said, simply :

"You are very good, Andrew. I would I were as good."

"In my flesh there is no good thing," was the prompt answer. "I am but vile earth, and deserve nothing at the Lord's hands ; that He should have made me a vessel of grace, is His own gift. To Him be the glory." Then after a pause he said :

"There is deep love for you in my heart, Amphyllis, but I will not speak of it now. I had a vision last night—a vision rather than a dream, and in it I saw you tossed about on a stormy sea, the waves roaring, threatening every instant to engulf you. It was given to me to answer your cry for help ; and battling with the waves, I reached you, and lifting you in my arms, I had you, by some mysterious power, safe on land, and your head resting on my breast ; and, your eyes raised to mine, you said : 'Andrew !' calling me by name, so clearly, that I

awoke ; ‘ Andrew, *I am safe !* ’ And, Amphyllis,” he said, solemnly, “ I believe that at last I shall hear you say these words to me, ‘ *I am safe !* ’ ”

Then raising his hands as if in blessing, he left her.

Amphyllis heard the door of the little meeting-house shut and barred, and she knew that Andrew had gone there to wrestle in prayer, as was his custom.

She stood as he had left her for a few moments, her sweet face turned up to the summer sky, where the daylight yet lingered in the west, and where the moon silvered the eastern heavens with a soft radiance, and then turned slowly towards the front of the house, where the air was laden with the fragrance of the honeysuckle growing over the porch, and the budding seringa, in the bed below the lattice casement of the parlour.

Meantime the sound of a quick, ringing footstep was heard on the road, and then there was a pause. Tom Browne, a hero of the great sea fight, stood irresolute by the wooden gates, longing, yet dreading to open them. His heart beat so loudly that he could hear it, and his strong breast, which had been turned so bravely to the fire of the Dutch guns, heaved violently.

How would Amphyllis receive him ? he asked

himself. The grave had but closed that morning over her father: would she resent his visit as an intrusion?

Moll had advised him to come, for he was to rejoin the fleet by sunrise the next morning. There was plenty more fighting before him. The rascally Dutch had not been taught their lesson even yet. This then was his only chance of seeing Amphyllis, of telling her of his love, of praying her to give him hope at least that she would at last respond to it.

Like many another brave and honourable man, Tom Browne had no exalted opinion of himself. The Tom Brownes of the world leave self-conceit and pretension to the shams. Honest in word and deed, they have enough self-reliance to do their duty, but too just a view of themselves to see anything remarkable or particularly praiseworthy in doing it. Like all young men whose hearts have been taken by storm as honest Tom's had been, he had raised the lady of his love to a very exalted pinnacle indeed: she was not only beautiful beyond compare, but she was endowed with every conceivable grace and goodness. While Andrew Whitelock could see her faults and weaknesses, and love her in spite of them, Tom Browne almost might be said to love her because of them.

Her little coquettish ways, her almost childlike joy in fine things and fine surroundings, her delight when she had learnt the steps in the minuet, the innate grace of her bearing to Master Howard and to the other men who deferred to her beauty : all these went to make up the rôle of Amphyllis Wyndham's perfection. Then how brave she had been on the night of the storm ; how devoted to her brain-sick father ; how admirable in all household duties. If she were in the least wanting in the somewhat flippant way in which she spoke of sacred things, was not that the result of having Puritan doctrine thrust down her throat by the stiff-backed young minister ? There was no misgiving in Tom's noble heart ; he loved Amphyllis : and if he loved an ideal, he is not the first, nor is he the last young man of his age who has done the same. Now he stood at the gate hesitating and almost trembling. The stout heart that had made him walk coolly into the very jaws of death to rescue a fellow-soldier almost failed him, as at last he gently pushed open the gate and found himself in the garden before Ford End Cottage.

Amphyllis, sitting in the shadow of the porch, was invisible to him, but the sound of his step, quietly as he came up the path, made her turn her head. As she advanced towards Tom in her long

black garments, her golden hair confined under a mourning hood, it seemed to Tom that she had never, in her gayest moments, looked so angelic.

For the moon revealed her face as it had revealed Andrew's half an hour before, and the pure white light gave a tint of unearthly loveliness to the beautiful contour of her face. There were dark rings round her eyes, which told of many tears, and the rosy mouth was closed over the ivory teeth as if it could never part again in smiles.

She came quickly towards Tom, and holding out her little hand said, simply :

"It is kind of you to come to this sad house, Master Browne."

Kind! when he had been almost beside himself with fear as to what his reception might be, that the revulsion of feeling, now he found himself welcome, was almost too much for him.

His plumed cap was in his hand in an instant, and, bending on one knee, he kissed the little hand he held, murmuring over it some incoherent words of love and gratitude.

"My cousin Bridget," Amphyllis said, "is sleeping in the parlour, worn out with all she has done ; and indeed"—here Amphyllis's voice faltered—"and, indeed, we have all been in great sorrow. My

poor father has had so little joy in his life, and now it is over, quite over. We laid him in the darksome grave this forenoon."

This speech of Amphyllis's gave Tom time to recover himself. He rose, and, drawing the little hand he still held through his arm, he ventured to put the other round the slight figure and led Amphyllis to the porch.

"Yes," she went on, continuing her sad strain. "Yes; while the joy-bells were ringing in the city for the victory, they were tolling here for my poor father. I knew," she went on, "that you were in the great victory. The news came on the fourth of June, the day he died. Your good father told me of it when he came here. Did you know I was alone with my father when he died?—and, oh! I am alone now. No one near—very near to me."

"Say not so, oh, Amphyllis! Come to me; take me as I am; a roughish sailor I know well, but true to you. Say you will be my wife."

In that hour of sorrow and desolation Amphyllis could do nothing else than lay her head against Tom's shoulder and sob bitterly. He soothed and comforted her, and kissed away her tears; and then followed one of those hours of nearly silent bliss for him, and contentment for her, which are too near

the experience of most of us in the dawn of youth and love, to need repetition here.

Long did Tom Browne linger in the garden, when, hearing Bridget stirring in the parlour, after two or three prolonged yawns, these two paced slowly down the garden together. Tom, now that he felt he possessed Amphyllis, began to rally himself. He spoke of the future and the uncertainty of a life like his; but he said truly that the nation was not always at war with the rascally Dutch, nor, indeed, at war with any people; and there would come a time of peace, and they would live like the Clerk of the Acts, Mr. Pepys, on the borders of the great world, and cross the border too, for his Highness the Duke had noticed him with favour as to a little matter aboard ship, which was scarce worth relating; and my Lord Sandwich had insisted on his name being in the despatch therefrom, he fancied.

Amphyllis did not ask what "the little matter" was, and honest Tom did not tell her. But he pleased himself with drawing a picture of the future, the fair, bright future when they should be together.

Then suddenly he became more serious, and he spoke of the desire he had to serve God as well as his King and country, and how he never knelt to pray without a mention of her name and craving a blessing upon her.

“And you, Amphyllis, may I crave the same favour of you? It makes a feeling of nearness, for ever since I was a little fellow I have been taught to pray for those I love. I was but fourteen when my good father sent me to France; and saith he—when my mother wept at parting, and I could scarce choke back my tears—‘God is in every place, Tom, and if we pray for one another it brings near what has seemed but distant before.’ Besides,” said honest Tom, with the steadfast air of one who believed what he said, “it would be a poor world to us, even in joy like mine to-night, if we could not say God was our refuge and strength. There’s none other, and nought else to keep us in the right way.”

Amphyllis was surprised a little to find Tom also could—as she termed it—preach. She scarcely acknowledged to herself what perhaps she really did not discern, that her brave young lover had within him the real secret of happiness whatever happened—“The fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom.”

Moll was anxiously awaiting her brother’s return that evening. Many friends and acquaintances had dropped in, and there was some inquiry for the hero and some indignation expressed by his elder sisters, that he had not appeared.

The Doctor himself was a little vexed that his son

had absented himself for so long. Only Moll sat with a light in her eyes and a smile on her lips, for *she* knew where her brother had gone, and she judged that had his errand been a bootless one he would have returned sooner.

At last, just as the party was breaking up and the Doctor invited them to take a moonlight stroll in the garden, Tom came in. He received all the congratulations of his father's friends, and after his own simple, modest fashion answered all questions as to the state of naval affairs, and described the action in a few graphic words.

Moll, who watched his face, felt that happiness was written there, and that the desire of his heart had been given him. Her eldest sisters Bess and Nan soon told her to go to bed, and she had only time to ask as she bid her brother good-night :

"How did she answer you, Tom?"

"As heart could wish," was the short reply ; and Moll was satisfied.

Mistress Browne, tired with all her exertions for the entertainment of her numerous guests that day, sought her husband for a few minutes in the library before retiring to rest.

As she expected, she found Tom was with him. Charts were spread before them, and the Doctor was

going into every detail of the probable action which the enemy would take after this signal defeat, with all the keen interest which characterized him in every subject. Mistress Browne's entrance, however, changed the conversation somewhat.

"Tom has won another victory to-night, Dorothy," the Doctor said ; "he has captured his prize in smooth waters ; eh, honest Tom ?"

"Yes, mother ; Amphyllis Windham will be your good daughter-in-law, an' it please you. Cherish her for my sake, mother, and if I am hit next time the bullets are whizzing round me, remember, I leave her to you as a legacy."

"Dear son, I pray you may cherish her long after I am laid in the grave," said Mistress Browne.

Tom took his mother's hand and kissed it, and then said :

"Grant me another favour, mother mine ; that ring you wear with the posy within, which came to you from our grandmother Mileham—let me have it to place on Amphyllis's little finger to-morrow ; for I have promised to see her and say Farewell in the early morning before I start for Lowestoft."

"That ring!" said Mistress Browne ; "nay, Tom, it is very precious, it was my mother's ring, and you know the words within, 'Doe the next thyng.' They

are words for work and labour, and not a love-posy."

"Nevertheless, grant the boy's request, Dorothy," said the Doctor, "for verily there is no love which weighs much in the scales, that is not wedded to work and duty."

Mistress Browne drew the ring somewhat slowly and reluctantly from her finger, and gave it to Tom. It was too small even for his little finger, for it was of thick chased gold, and though apparently large and massive, the actual circumference was small. One lovely sapphire was set deep in the rich chasing, and was of great value.

"I cannot refuse you aught, dear son," she said. "Take the ring to Amphyllis as a token that we receive her as a dear daughter while she remaineth true to you."

Tom kissed the ring, and said: "And may God help us to 'doe the next thyng' well, be it for death or life."

And then, with his father's and mother's blessing, he left them.

The dew was yet sparkling on the trees and turf like a thousand diamonds in the first rays of the rising sun, when Tom found himself the next morning at the Cottage at Cringleford. He knew Amphyllis's

window well, and to his joy he saw her at the open lattice, waving her hand to him. No one was yet awake in the house, as Amphyllis stole down to meet her lover.

"I have brought you a token, sweet one," he said, "which I will put on your finger, and pray you to wear it for my sake; and, mind, it is a sign of unchanging love."

Amphyllis's eyes glistened as Tom fitted the ring on the slender fourth finger of her left hand.

Then he withdrew it again, and pointed to the motto within. As he did so, the sapphire caught the sunshine, and flashed in the light.

"They say that sapphires and some other precious stones gleam brightly when the love of giver and receiver burns pure and bright; but that the stones wax pale and dim when either fades or fails in truth and allegiance."

Amphyllis took the ring as Tom was speaking, and was reading the motto.

"'Doe the next thyng!' That is quaint and strange; methought rings or love tokens had always a posy of loving words."

"These are good words, sweet one, nevertheless, and mean more than may appear. In any case, wear this ring till I place another on thy hand."

"Aye, that I will," said Amphyllis, "and Tom,"—she called him by his name in her most bewitching accent for the first time—"and Tom, *I will be true.*"

Then Tom held her to his breast, and the thrushes and blackbirds sang their sweetest songs as a pæan for their betrothal, and ten minutes later, ere the old Cringleford Church clock had chimed for six, they parted.

There were no misgivings in honest Tom's heart as he repassed the City Gate, and was quickly at the door of his father's house, there to say Farewell to all who loved him so well in his happy home. His love for Amphyllis strengthened rather than weakened other ties, and he felt altogether braced for what might be coming in the future.

"I will 'doe the next thyng,' and God will defend the right," he said, as he mounted his horse, fully accoutred, with his man on another behind him, and took the road to Lowestoft, to rejoin the fleet.

Amphyllis, standing in the honeysuckle porch admired her beautiful ring, twisting it round and round on her finger. She watched the sapphire blaze and shine in the sunlight, which seemed to intensify the lovely blue colour, which rivalled the waters of

the Mediterranean when the sun looks into its pelucid depths on summer mornings.

Amphyllis kissed the ring again and again, and her face so sad and grief-struck only the evening before, was now turned to meet Andrew, who came down the stairs, with a smile.

"Andrew," she said, "Master Tom Browne has given me this ring. See how lovely it is. I am to wear it for his sake, and when he comes back, then——"

Amphyllis stopped; the spasm of pain which passed over Andrew's face made her say :

"Andrew, are you ill?"

Then Andrew recovered himself at once.

"Nay, I am well enow. That is a pretty bauble. Do not hold it in too high esteem, but make your treasures secure, where moth cannot corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal."

"You always like to damp my joy, Andrew," she said, crossly. "You need not grudge me the ring, nor the love of which it's a token. I am all alone in the world. You and Bridget are kind, yes, kind; but——" and poor Andrew's heart ached with self-reproach, as Amphyllis turned into the house weeping bitterly.

"Alas! alas!" he sighed, and he closed the door

of his little room behind him. "Alas! I, that would lay down my life for that child, seem doomed **ever** to shadow her with sadness. It is a heavy cross **laid** on me to bear, but not too heavy for my deserts, I shall see her no more; and it is well, for it is time I were on my way to the plague-stricken district, where, if I fall, I fall, and it may be well, nay, better that I should never again *damp her joy*, as she said—I, that would fain give her the best joy. But let me gird on my armour, and prepare for the battle."

And thus the two heroes went forth to fight on that radiant summer day. Many a scar shall each one show as tokens of the battle ere we hear of them again.

The Angels, those ministers of His who do His pleasure, shall alone tell which struggle was the sorest, and which wounds the deepest. Brave and true hearts both, their reward and victory are sure.

PART II.

1671.

I THANK God for my happy dreams, as I do for my good rest. And surely it is not a melancholy conceit to think we are all asleep in this world, and that the conceits of this life are as mere dreams to those of the next—as the phantasm of the night, to the conceit of the day. There is an equal delusion in both, and the one doth seem to be the emblem or picture of the other. We are sometimes more than ourselves in our sleep, and the slumber of the body seems to be but the waking of the soul.

We term sleep a Death—and yet it is the waking that kills us, and destroys those spirits that are the house of life.

In fine, sleep is so like Death, I dare not trust it without my prayers and an half adieu to the world, and take my farewell in a colloquy with God.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE—*Religio Medici*.



VISIONS OF THE NIGHT.

THERE is but little change in the Doctor since we saw him last, six years before the August evening when he steps into the spacious hall, and inquires of old Jonas what messages await him.

"A gentleman awaits you in the library," was the reply. "Sir Robert Paston, please your honour."

"Aye, but that is welcome news, good Jonas ; and your mistress has not returned with Mistress Fairfax ?"

Jonas shook his head.

"Well, then, see that a light supper is served in the library, not to disturb the consultation I shall probably hold with Sir Robert," was the reply, and the Doctor opened the library door, and found his friend seated before a table, where several books were open, and some glasses and lenses, with a lump of ore, lay before him.

The two men shook each other warmly by the hand, and the Doctor said :

"What ! have you been examining Arthur Dee's little matters ? He left them on that table last night. Have you discovered aught since we met, and have ridden in with the news, Sir Robert ?"

"Nay, nothing new ; but I hold to the old faith ; nor am I like to be shaken, despite your new faith, good friend."

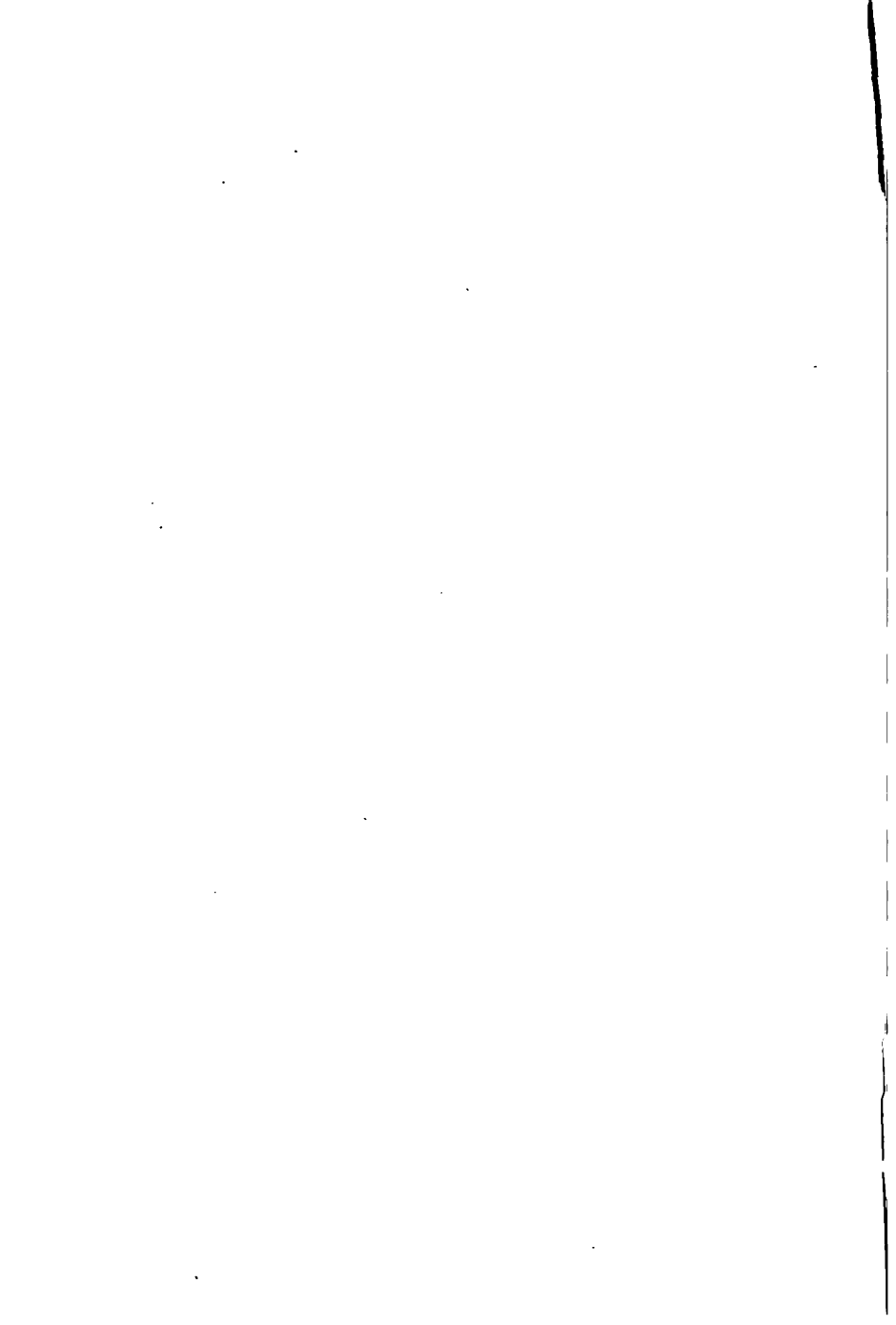
"That does me some discredit, Sir Robert. I say to Arthur Dee as to you—all my poor instruments, and all my poorer thought and research are at your service in your quest. Though for myself I see not with your eyes, nor hope with your hope, yet far be it from me to doubt the sincerity which characterises you and my friend Dee, in this, as in all else."

"Nay, good friend, I know well how it stands with you ; but if you believe not fully in the power of alchemy to turn this base metal to gold, nor in the power of the astrologer, who can predict our fate by the influence of the stars, yet you believe in the honesty of purpose which compels me and many another man to sift the matter to the bottom, till we come at the truth."

"The truth ; aye, the truth," said the Doctor ; "and I doubt not that out of these two sciences shall emerge things of beauty, though, perchance, those



IN THE HOUSE OF SIR THOMAS BROWNE.



things be not gold nor silver, but somewhat more precious. Men greater than we are, have speculated thereon, and we are verily but pigmies to my Lord Bacon, who had lofty conceptions of the resources of experiments in this line and others."

"I was but musing on these things till your return," said Sir Robert Paston, rising from the stool placed before the little table where the crystals and instruments lay, and throwing himself full length on a well-cushioned settle by the hearth, where, August though it was, logs of wood were piled, which only waited the touch of the Doctor's foot to send up the open chimney a multitude of sparks and diffuse a cheerful glow in the spacious room.

"Forsooth, I came not to-day to speak of alchemy, but of other matters. I hear it is put beyond a doubt that their Majesties come hither from Newmarket with a vast retinue. You have heard the same?"

"Yes, to my amazement I was summoned to the Palace early this morning by my Lord Duke, to consult as to the preparations he is to make for this royal visit. Methinks however loyal and true to my king I may be, I would not choose to pull about my poor place as his grace proposes to pull about his stately palace. The roofing of the great bowling-green seemeth to me a bold venture indeed,

and one to be deplored, for we can scarce forget the praise it hath won from many a visitor to the city, Queen Elizabeth amongst them."

"It seemeth to me," said Sir Robert Paston, "that we have gone mad as a nation on royalty, as a few years ago we had gone mad on the destruction of royalty. It is not for me to stand aloof, and I would fain that you would come to Oxnead, and give your judgment on what we should prepare, and how, for their Majesties."

"I will do so with all satisfaction; and as there are fewer calls on me than at times, I will come to-morrow. But you will tarry here for the night? I pray you do not refuse. Here cometh my great helper in all matters, for next to Ned, I count on Arthur Dee."

"An' you are pleased to say so, sir," was the reply of a fair complexioned young man, who made a respectful bow to Sir Robert Paston.

"Sir Robert is curious enow about the little matters on yon table," the Doctor said, with a smile. "Have you seen any of the ladies?"

"Mistress Mary is in the Mistress Browne's room; but Mistress Fairfax and her mother, with little Frances, have gone in the coach on a visif of ceremony to Trowes, and have not yet returned."

"And how find you Moll? for methinks strangers see what we who are with a patient daily fail to notice."

"I would not be reckoned as a stranger," said Arthur Dee, quickly. "Methinks Mistress Mary is somewhat stronger."

"Ah"—and the Doctor sighed. "So many losses have made me less sanguine than of old. My daughter Mary, Sir Robert, frets and pines for news of him who sailed on a venturesome cruise beyond the seas, now near four years ago, and no word, no sign since. Forsooth, Sir Robert, when death comes, and we see those we love vanish before our eyes—and God knows I have had experience of that, and left its bitterness—we can more readily accept the blow than when we know nothing of how, or when, and where. To die peacefully, as my daughter Fairfax's babe died, an infant of days, may bring tears to the eyes and a sore pain to a mother's heart. To depart by an accident, as our Robert departed, in his bright boyhood, is grievous to those who love him; but to go forth, noble and brave, and be heard of no more, that is a sorrow too deep for words."

"Your noble sailor son, sir," Sir Robert said, "lives in the hearts of the people. Think you any in this country and city forget what he was; nay, let me hope I may yet say, what he is?"

The Doctor shook his head : " Were he in life we should have had some sign ere this. Honest Tom would know full well what those he left behind endured."

" It was a lamentable thing that he ever set sail for the West, and a still more lamentable thing why he did it," Arthur Dee exclaimed.

" A fair lady was in the case, as I have heard," Sir Robert said.

" Sir," said the Doctor, rising as was his wont when he was deeply moved ; " sir, there have been women, fair as angels, who have wrought dire distress before to-day. It is not for me to speak of her, who went near to break my noble son's heart. I dare not trust myself to do so. I judge her not. My own sweet Moll will not have me to do so, and it is for her sake I wash out from my memory by the waters of Lethe, the name of Amphyllis Windham. But let us to our supper, and perchance Sir Robert may see good to allow Moll to join us, Arthur."

Arthur Dee needed no second bidding ; he went quickly to the sitting-room, where Moll was seated by the window, gazing up into the clear evening sky, where a planet was shining over the gables of the houses.

Your father prays you to join us at supper with Sir Robert Paston ; do not refuse."

The swift hectic colour came to Moll's pale cheek.

"I am in no mood for company," she said. "Do not ask me."

Arthur Dee sighed.

"I would I could cheer you, Mistress Mary ; but you will have none of me."

"Nay, say not so. I am ever glad to see you here, and listen to your wonderful talk, and your hopes of discovery ; but Arthur," she continued, more gently and almost tenderly, "I have no wish for the company of strangers, while there is for ever in my heart a longing for the voices I can never hear again. Forgive me."

Arthur Dee took one of the thin white hands in his and kissed it reverently. He was her lover, and she knew it—more by a tacit understanding than a distinct avowal. Her health had so entirely broken down since her brother had left them, to return no more, and Amphyllis had so deeply disappointed them that the idea of marriage could not be entertained.

Arthur Dee was like a son in the house, and her brother Ned's chief companion when he was in Norwich. His father was one of the Doctor's oldest friends, and the tie was a strong one, but he never pressed his suit upon the pale, ethereal-looking girl, whose luminous eyes and transparent skin told

but too plainly the tale of consumption, which, however long averted, must deal a fatal blow at last.

He left Mary now without another word, and in five minutes after the door had closed upon him it opened to admit Andrew Whitelock.

Mary started up.

"Have you any news?" she asked; "speak, if you have," and she pressed her hand to her side.

"No direct news," Andrew said, seating himself by Mary: "no direct news. Do not, I pray you, agitate yourself."

"If indirect, then—tell me—I pray you."

Andrew opened his long black coat, which was buttoned closely from the neck to the feet, and took from a deep pocket a letter, which he was about to hand to Mary when she said:

"Nay, I cannot read it, I tremble so much. Is it—can it be from her, from Amphyllis?"

"Nay, not from her, but from one who sees her daily in the evil atmosphere in which, I pray the Lord, all that is good in her may not wither and die. It was ordered, in the providence of the Lord, that one who hath attended my ministrations at Thorpe has a cousin placed with my Lady Sanderson about the person of Her Majesty the Queen. She

having made mention of my poor services and desire that her kinswoman could benefit from the same, which indeed is for none to boast of, as boasting is for ever excluded ; the letter wherein my name appeared reached the ear of Mistress Windham, the rest is set forth as follows :

“ ‘ DEAR COUSIN,—This is to apprise you that I shall ere long be in Norwich in the train of my Lady Sanderson, who waits upon the Queen’s majesty. We are setting forth for Audley End on the morrow, whither the baggage and many of the servants precede us.

“ ‘ Dear Cousin, think not it is always a fine thing to be about the person of royalty ; not that it is royalty that I lodge any complaint against, but my lady is full of cross tricks and ugly tempers. Only yester eve she boxed my ears because the lace of her ruffle fell the hundredth part of an inch out of its place by reason of some unevenness in the crimping-iron. Well-a-day, there are sharp corners everywhere. But I must hasten to let you know that when I received yours with the news of how you were moved by Master Andrew Whitelock’s preaching, I chanced to speak of it when I was sorting some silk for the embroidery of her Majesty’s

mantle, and Mistress Windham looked up from the guitar over which her fingers were idly straying.

“‘I have spoken of Mistress Windham’s beauty before this, and indeed it is so matchless that all eyes are on her wherever we go. Then she said, “And what do you know of Andrew Whitelock?”

“‘I replied, “Only what I had said, that his preaching reached all hearts who heard him.” Then Mistress Windham clasped her hands, saying,

““Would they could reach my heart, but it is turned to stone.” And with that flung down the guitar, and, turning, fled from the room. Poor soul, it was grievous to see her. But I must stop here, and I pray that God may keep you safe.’

“That is all I have to tell you, Mistress Mary; it points, however, to this, that in the train of the Queen, with all the gauds and follies, we shall soon see Amphyllis.”

“Oh! Master Whitelock,” Mary said eagerly, “if only I could see her and hear from her lips how it stands with her! When she left us with that kinswoman of my Lady Sanderson, how little we divined that she would return no more. Oh! to lose them both—for never again shall we look on my brother, nor hear what was his end.”

"Nay, I would not say as much ; he may return when the sore wound is healed."

"Master Whitelock," Mary said, "I can never understand Amphyllis ; it is a mystery."

"A mystery no further than this, that when the love of the world, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life, gain the victory, all better and nobler feelings are crushed out."

"But she was so winning ; so loving in so many ways ; so good, and full of wit and talent, and yet—and yet——."

Andrew did not finish her sentence, and Mary continued :

"I think her shunning us, after she had broken her faith to Tom, was from shame and fear of how we should judge her. Bess was so hard on her, and Nan ; and yet, if as she woke up and found her love for Tom was not *the* love, such as can last for life and death, Amphyllis was right to tell him so."

"Yes," said Andrew, with a strange light in his eye ; "but I fear me that the love of the world was stronger than the love of any husband could be in Amphyllis's heart."

"It seems all as fresh in my heart as if it had happened yesterday. Tom coming home laden with more honours, when the hundred and fifty

merchantmen and battleships were utterly routed, and the town of Brandaris destroyed. How proud we were of all the grand things said of him ! How all the chief and gallant gentlemen, Prince Rupert, His Grace of York, and His Grace of Beaufort all spoke of Tom as the bravest and the best ! I see him now as he came in after he had returned aboard the 'Marie Rose,' from the Mediterranean. And how his heart sank when I told him the news that Amphyllis had gone to London with that niece of my Lady Sanderson, who tempted her away from us."

"There was other temptation, methinks," said Andrew sadly, "a worse temptation."

"I do not know," said Mary. "Oh, I do not know ; but I cannot forget how I loved her, and still must love her for Tom's sake. Did he not pray us all to cherish her, if he were at last struck down or died by any disaster at sea ?"

Andrew was silent : it seemed to him that Amphyllis had forfeited the right to the fulfilment of that promise, but he could not say so. His love for her was so utterly and entirely without taint of self, that he would have done anything and everything in his power to see her reinstated in the good opinion of the Doctor's family, especially in that of the Doctor himself.

"I know not," Mary continued, "why I tell you all this evening, which you have heard before. But my spirit seems to be in strange communion with my brother. When the door opened, and Arthur Dee came in, I said, 'Tom!' and when you entered I felt sure you had news in a sort connected with him. So it has proved. My dreams, too, circle round these two continually, and I think of those words my father has ofttime spoken concerning sleep, which he has put into English from the Greek of Pindar's Dirges, that 'we are more than ourselves in sleep.' Have you never had strange visions and felt yourself near or a *part of* something you cannot reach when waking?"

And Andrew did remember his dream of Amphyllis of which he had told her. But again he was silent.

"If I can, I will repeat those words, and then tell you how I see and *believe* in what I see when I am sleeping. The words are—

'All by happy fate attain
The end that frees them from their pain,
And the body yields to Death—
But the shape of vital breath
Still in life continueth.
It alone is Heaven's conferring.
It slumbers it when the limbs are stirring.

But when *they* sleep in many dreams it shows
The coming consummation both of joys and woes.' "

Mary's face was positively aglow with earnestness as these words left her lips slowly and with a little hesitation here and there. After a silence Andrew said :

"These are the words of a heathen ; there are better consolations and higher hopes for the Christian than aught that Pindar could know of."

"Yes, in some degree ; but the seekers after truth, sure they were not denied light, though it come through a chink. My father has read and studied them so deeply, and he has so large a heart and sympathy that he can receive them all, though as I have heard him say, taking care not to store chaff with the grain."

A few years before this time Andrew would have vehemently asserted that there could be no grain anywhere but in the small and narrow store-house where he gathered his own nourishment. Everything outside must be husks, fit only for the swine to eat. But the vehement declaration of his own infallibility or the infallibility of his creed, whichever it may be called, was over. A blessed charity had succeeded to bitter bigotry, and though holding his own views with the tenacity that nothing could

shake, he yet had a wider margin for those who differed from him, when, as he saw in Mary's case, the life did not run counter to the faith she held.

He had of late years found a strange satisfaction in talking with Mary Browne, and the love she bore Amphyllis through all the past, made a tie between them. Bridget mourned for her, but Joan denounced her, while Mistress Howse had a perpetual flow of gossip about her. Rumours of her marriage had been frequent, then of a condition of things of which Andrew could not dare to think. It is always a comfort to those whose idols have proved but clay, to find someone who will yet speak of them as gold. Long, long after our own faith in one we love is vanished ; long, long after we have been forced to acknowledge to ourselves that our trust was misplaced, our staff but a broken reed, we like to please ourselves by talking to someone, who, perhaps ignorant of the real state of affairs, or willing to believe still, can for the time cheat us into the delusion that the dark shadow has not really eclipsed the light of our sun, but that we are still basking in its warmth and influence.

It was something like this that Andrew felt when he was with Mary, and she, on her part, had a growing admiration for him, dating from the days of

the Plague, which had in 1666 visited Norwich most heavily.

The better sort of people had all fled to the country. Some of the doctors flinched, as one or two of their numbers fell before the dreaded scourge. But Andrew Whitelock was here, there, and everywhere, and the great Doctor recognised in the stiff Puritan minister, on whom he had looked coldly and suspiciously, one of those who win a crown as bright as many a soldier on the field of battle.

"I can never forget that May day, now four years ago," Moll said, "when my brother came in so full of life and joy, and it was left to me to tell him Amphyllis had left us with Mistress Nurse. I bid him come to you to learn the truth. Just as he looked then, so I saw him last night, only there was a glow on his face, a light like that on one of the pictures in Mr. Howard's private chamber, which Bess vainly tried to copy in black and white. Yes, that is how Tom looked; and here is the strange part of it, he did not speak to me, nor could I speak to him, but he held towards me a ring in which a marvellous blue sapphire was shining, and smiled and vanished. Then I woke, and slept again, and this time it was not Tom, but Amphyllis, with her golden hair hanging loose around her, but she did

not smile, but looked like one in bitter woe. Surely these two visions coming in one night mean somewhat. You cannot say nay to that, Master Whitelock."

But Andrew had not time to say either yes or no ; for Mistress Browne and her handsome married daughter, Mrs. Fairfax, came into the room, with her two sisters, Bess and little Frances, who had only just grown into her teens. Mistress Browne was still a fine comely matron, but there were signs of care and sorrow on her face. Several little ones had vanished from her nursery since the night of the hurricane in 1665, when we first saw her. Her boy Robert was gone, and Tom, the light of her eyes, hidden from her, whether alive or dead, none could tell with any certainty. Full of honours he had returned from Portsmouth in the May of 1667, and the bells of St. Peters Mancroft rang a merry peal to welcome the Doctor's sailor son. But his first question was one which no one liked to answer. He had asked—

"Amphyllis, is she not here to greet me?" And poor Moll had drawn him aside and told him that she had gone as waiting-maid under Lady Sanderson to the Court, and only rumours had reached them since. One short letter of farewell, and that was

all. "Forget me," she had said, "though I shall remember you."

But Tom had sought her out with a certainty that he should find her ready to return with him and fulfil her promise. He left Norwich two days after his return home, full of hope. He came back from his interview with Amphyllis so changed, that it seemed impossible he could be the merry, light-hearted hero of a hundred fights. He said little, but Moll gathered from what she heard that his quest had been in vain. Amphyllis had been false to her true-hearted, noble brother, though she knew no particulars.

Perhaps the Doctor knew more; for, with a sternness that his children never remembered from him before, he forbade all mention of her name from that time forward.

In the autumn of that year, Tom having left the navy, where promotion and distinction were certain, joined an expedition to the far west of America, promising to return when his wound was healed—if ever it pleased God to heal it this side the grave.

The Doctor was too used to travel, and too anxious to promote the love of it in his children, to offer any grave opposition. Indeed, he gave a willing consent, provided Tom with money, and gave him a long list of inquiries to be made as to the fauna

and flora of those far-off lands, together with exact observations as to the flying-fish, and other wonders of the great and wide sea, which, in those days, made so impassable a barrier for most people between the Old World and the New.

Love of adventure and love of knowledge went hand in hand in Tom's heart, and his brother Ned, now known as a young physician, fast treading in his father's steps, as Dr. Edward Browne, was almost envious of his brother's freedom to cross the wide Atlantic, and see for himself the wonders of the El Dorado of the West.

Thus honest Tom had set forth in the autumn of 1667, and a letter brought by a private hand in the midsummer of the following year, was all that had been since heard of him.

Silence had fallen. Was 'it, indeed, the silence of the grave?



WITH THE COURT AT WHITEHALL.

1671.

THERE was a great bustle and excitement in the Queen's household at Whitehall, on the morning of the day of departure for Audley End. Even now, when journeys are made so easy for royalty, and for less exalted personages, there are yet some upon whom the weight of arrangement falls, who find their tempers sorely tried.

My Lady Sanderson, called in old records, "the Mother of the Mayds," and her niece Madame Nurse, were continually coming into collision with the bed-chamber women, whose duty it was to see that her Majesty's wardrobe was complete ; and that certain ruffles, lace, and "paniers," were in due order, to place with the train and bodice, and farthingales which the Queen must needs take—a change two or three times every day being considered imperative.

Then there were the wardrobes of the ladies. My Lady Scroope and my Lady Pettigrew had a passage-of-arms as to the enormous amount of head-dresses which she required to be packed.

The younger part of the household were flitting here, there, and everywhere, and rather enjoying rushing backwards and forwards, the strife of tongues and the general confusion.

They were not responsible for omissions, and thus the distress and anxiety of their elders and superiors did not greatly disturb their serenity.

They chattered and laughed, and rallied one of their number upon her grave looks.

"Methinks, Mistress Windham, you might cheer up a bit ; one would think we were all going to our graves at Norwich, unless we are struck for death at Audley End. See, here is your guitar-ribbon, the one the King gave you, with that brave jewel shining in the knot. Will you leave that all soiled on the floor? Fie ! for shame !"

Amphyllis picked up the ribbon, and tossing it to the little bright-eyed maid of honour, Margery Price, said :

"I'll give it to you ; I care nought for it."

Margery made a gesture of surprise.

"But I dare not take it. His Majesty may spy it out."

"What care I?" was the reply ; and then with a listless weariness, which struck even the light-hearted Margery, Amphyllis went along the corridor towards

a small room at the further end, which was allotted to her and an attendant.

Her possessions, although numerous, were small when compared with the immense paraphernalia, which the elder ladies thought it necessary to drag about the country, in the large baggage-waggons and pack-horses which were sent on before the King and Queen's retinue, with servants appointed to take charge of them, and prepare the apartments which their Majesties and their suite were to occupy.

Several of these waggons had already been despatched, and the coaches and some smaller ones were to leave Whitehall about ten o'clock.

Amphyllis had received her marching orders from Lady Sanderson, that she was to be ready to attend her in the coach next to her Majesty's an hour later.

There was yet some time before she need put on her travelling-gown, with its tight-fitting bodice and velvet hood, lined with cherry-coloured satin; and dismissing her maid, who was very glad to escape to flirt with two or three grooms of the chamber in the gallery, Amphyllis threw herself upon the settee, before the window, and clasping her hands, she exclaimed, aloud :

“Norwich! how can I endure to see Norwich? Will they know me now? will they speak to me, if perchance they do recognise me? I could not meet the Doctor’s eyes—those strange eyes, so like *his*. They are for ever before me with a haunting glance of reproach. And Moll, sweet Moll! and Andrew. How could I dare to look on Andrew? Oh, would that I were a happy girl again in the cottage! Yet I did not deem myself happy then, I was craving for what I got, and bitter has been the harvest. When Mistress Bendish and Hal—poor foolish Hal, bid me listen to him, and get my Lady Sanderson’s niece to recommend me to this place, telling me it was a fine thing to get in, as an attendant at Court, I did not think of what was coming. Then in the first glamour of flatterers, and theatres, and dancing, and gifts, *he* came post-haste to carry me away from it. If he had come later when the bloom was worn off the peach, if—if—— Why do I dwell on if’s? I could not brook his taking me as if I were his chattel. I *must* go home with him. *Must*, forsooth; there is no must. Then how his eyes flashed, and then how the light was put out by tears. How could I be so hard? I tossed him back his ring, and bid him ‘doe the next thyng,’ and leave me to do the same. I see him now, looking

at the sapphire, which was curiously dim ; and, fitting the ring on his finger, he only said, 'Till death, or till you recall me, farewell.'

"I thought he would come back, but he never came. Edward Browne came and lectured me like a naughty child, and said they all renounced me. Ah! poor father used to speak of the evil eye that had bewitched him and mother and the little ones. Verily some evil eye had bewitched me. What is it all worth now—the finery, and the gay dresses, and men at my feet? The other ladies hate me for it; jealousy goes near to eat out their hearts. My Lady Sanderson is spiteful because Her Majesty always asks Mistress Windham to play to her; and then His Majesty, I dread his bold black eyes, and I loathe—I hate the shameful things I see around me. At the theatre last night; that dreadful Moll Davies, and my Lady Castlemaine looking like a fury, and the King laughing and cracking jokes.

"If I were free I would—I almost think I would—go to Bridget, poor Bridget! But I am not free; I can never be free again. Tied, bound with the chain, what is it that prayer sayeth in the Evening Service of our Church?—'Tied and bound with the chain of sin.'"

A tap at the door made her start up, and on

opening it a man dressed in the extreme of fashion stood before her.

"Well-a-day, what's amiss now, Phyllis? Come, give me a kiss and smile."

"I can scarce do either," said Amphyllis, drawing back. "Do you come with the Court to Audley End?"

"I follow if the mood takes me," was the careless answer. "I have other fish frying that may keep me back."

"But," Amphyllis said, trying to keep calm, "you said you would acknowledge me as your wife. You vowed——"

"Nay, now, beautiful Phyllis; of course it will come in time. You see, my remaining a true Catholic, and you not yet received into the arms of Mother Church, makes a hindrance."

"You said it made no hindrance; Her Majesty said so. Did you not marry me in the private chapel? did not the priest say——?"

"Poor old Father Pedro, he fell down in a fit of apoplexy a month ago, and is dead."

Amphyllis did not wholly take in what that implied, that dead men tell no tales.

"You see," said the young man, "it will ruin me if I let out at Hardwicke too soon that I have

married you or anybody. My kindred are such mighty stiff Catholics ; and, besides, I am only a younger branch of my Lord Shrewsbury's house and I eat his bread. As soon as I have settled matters, I'll be off to Hardwicke and have it out, and take you there as my lady, and we will have a grand wedding."

"I want no other wedding," said Amphyllis, with a frightened glance in her eyes ; "no other, we are wed."

"Yes, yes, doubtless ; and this is but farewell for a few weeks. Perchance I shall join the *melée* at Newmarket. But, being short of coin here" (and he slapped his pouch), "I must have a care. Have you a few of those precious gold pieces about you, you are ever winning at loo, beautiful Phyllis, more beautiful than ever?" and the man's arm stole round her waist as he said, "I'll take a kiss and the coins together."

Amphyllis went to a little bureau, and counted out ten gold coins, and pushing them towards her husband, said :

"Take them ; they are nought to me."

"Double the number then, for I mean to play high to-night, and turn them into hundreds ; eh, Phyllis ?"

Listlessly, as she did everything else, Amphyllis took out ten more pieces from a crimson velvet bag, and then, with a little scornful laugh, said :

“ Is *that* enow ? ”

Apparently it was, for throwing his richly lined velvet cape across his shoulder, and declaring that Amphyllis was the loveliest angel he had ever seen, he departed.

It is impossible to exaggerate the evil atmosphere of the Court at this time. It must not then be thought unnatural that the story of Mistress Windham's marriage in the Queen's chapel to a young Roman Catholic scion of a noble house excited any particular remark. The poor Queen herself had to see so many sad lapses from the straight path around her, that she lent herself almost eagerly to encourage the marriages of her ladies ; and when Sir Christopher Talbot, with his handsome person and manners, formed on the easy, good-natured model of his master, knelt before her and prayed her to allow his marriage in the private chapel to beautiful Amphyllis Windham by Father Pedro, she consented. To win Amphyllis to her faith was surely a good work, and if Father Pedro had no scruples, why should she ? Her ignorance of English customs and manners, her imperfect acquaintance

with the language, all blinded her to the trap which the unprincipled Christopher had laid for Amphyllis. Father Pedro was no real priest—the marriage was a mere sham. For a time Christopher was devoted to Amphyllis, but by degrees his ardour cooled. He had been absent from the court for some time, and it was at Hampton Court Palace in the preceding spring that Amphyllis had first been awakened to the strange conduct of him whom she believed to be her husband. But she had no friends and no advisers. She shrank from applying to the Brownes, much more did she fear to go to Bridget and Andrew.

While the glamour of the new life was yet upon her, she had told herself she could get on very well without her old friends. They would hear of her at last, and be proud of her. But as she said herself, "The bloom was soon rubbed off the peach." The very beauty which was so attractive made her an object of jealousy amongst the mean, worldly natures around her. Her wit and repartee, which she had soon learned to use, were turned as a weapon against her. The poor Queen herself was kind, as she understood kindness, but her aims were narrow; and brought up in a convent, from which she was taken a very short time before her marriage to

Charles, she was indeed but little fitted for the life she had to lead as his neglected queen.

There were times when she seemed to delight in stately ceremonies, and would tolerate no departure from court etiquette. At others, when excited by music, she would dance in the wildest spirits, and then lose all the stiff decorous manner which generally characterised her. Her religion, which was a part of herself, brought her no real comfort in her many troubles. It was one of much outward observance, and later her adherence to it brought her into trouble in the days when the infamous Titus Oates and his confederates were swearing away the lives of innocent, peace-loving people.

Amphyllis was an undoubted favourite with the Queen, and she would continually make some excuse to summon her to her presence. Lady Suffolk consequently took every opportunity of showing her dislike, and treated Amphyllis with an almost scathing contempt. Indeed, if anything went wrong with the Queen's laces or farthingales (which she still wore) or if any brooch or crimping pin was mislaid, the carelessness was, if possible, brought home to one of Lady Sanderson's maids in general, and to Mistress Amphyllis Windham in particular.

The journey to Audley End was performed in the usual slow fashion, and in the "maids' coach" the ordinary wrangling, and joking by turns, went on.

Amphyllis settled herself in a corner, and, closing her eyes, tried to lose consciousness in a doze. Margery Price and one of the other maids were too full of excitement to be quiet.

They chatted and laughed as empty-headed young women are wont to do now-a-days, very much as they did two hundred years ago.

Margery was much younger than Amphyllis, and was really devoted to her. Her little heart was untouched by jealousy, for she had her own concerns in her native village, and, faithful to her lover, who was one of the Duke of York's train, seldom looked out for, nor wished for, anything beyond.

Margery had only lately been enrolled as a "mayd" under Lady Sanderson, and she was ignorant of Amphyllis's past history.

"How pale and wan the beauty looks," said her companion. "Faith, she will soon be too plain and old to hold her own."

"She is most beautiful as she is," said Margery indignantly. "Old and plain, forsooth! who is fit to compare with her?"

"Ah! well, you'll see. Someone is tired of her already, and is taking up with another. He is shooting at higher game."

"Who is it you speak of?"

"Sir Christopher Talbot surely."

"But——" and Margery stopped, for Amphyllis suddenly sat upright in her corner, and turning her beautiful sad eyes on the two girls, said :

"I have not really slept," she said in a tremulous voice, "what you have said, Bridget Wells, may be true; but methinks you would not willingly pierce a sad heart with a barbed arrow; therefore I pray you, hold your peace."

Margery nestled close to Amphyllis and said, "Nay, it is a crying sin to grieve you. Pardon me."

"Pardon!" exclaimed Mistress Wells. "The notion! Why, I care not if those who are at my feet one day are off at a tangent the next. Love is a jest to most men, and so I say, let us make it a jest also."

"Nay, nay," said Margery Price, now tearful and subdued. "Love is true and beautiful, and cannot die, only methinks we do not know how beautiful it is till it is lost. Not that I have lost it; my Richard Bolton is, oh, so true and faithful; as sailors ever are, they say."

"And they say well," Amphyllis replied in her most pathetic voice. "It is not always the men who turn like the weather-cock, Mistress Bridget. Nay, not always. Perchance those who have forsaken deserve to be deserted in their turn, for it is said, we make our own punishments ; and, alas ! for us, when it is bitter : like mine," she added in a lower tone.

"Well-a-day !" exclaimed Bridget Wells ; "I did not think to raise such a storm. But we have ears and eyes, and they say that Sir Christopher Talbot has won a fair ladye now, of immense riches, a City magnate's daughter, whose purse is heavy enough, even for him. And as to you, Mistress Amphyllis, sure *you*, the great beauty of the Court, can afford to let a dozen such lovers as Christopher Talbot go. For myself, I loathe him, with his airs and his folly."

"You know not what you say, Mistress Bridget," was the reply. "I pray you be silent."

"Aye, will I, and it so pleases you," was the answer ; "but other tongues will wag, if mine is quiet."

Margery pressed Amphyllis's hand in token of sympathy, and soon Mistress Bridget, having delivered her shaft, and not ill-pleased that it had struck home, subsided into her corner, and was soon joining Mistress Moore, who was in the same coach, in very sonorous snoring.

Audley End was prepared for the reception of their Majesties in a truly regal fashion, and the Queen was delighted and in her gayest mood.

On the night of the arrival of the Court, the Queen heard that a great fair was being held at Saffron Walden, and she spent the next day in devising a scheme whereby she might attend the fair, *incognita*.

Frances, Duchess of Richmond, was easily won over to enter into the plan of visiting the fair in disguise, though the Duchess of Buckingham, the daughter of the Puritan Fairfax, objected, and prayed Her Majesty to consider well what might happen. But the brave old Sir Bernard Gascoigne, willing to humour the Queen, consented to be her escort, and accordingly the preparations were made. The needles of the maids in waiting being put into requisition, Amphyllis was employed in embroidering a waistcoat with gay colours for Her Majesty, who was to wear a short red petticoat and a black jerkin over this brilliant waistcoat.

It happened that Amphyllis went into a small boudoir with the waistcoat in her hand, and found Her Majesty there alone pirouetting before the glass, placing her arms akimbo, and putting out her small feet, first on heel, then on toe, as she had been told country-folk danced in that fashion.

Amphyllis was not seen till within a yard of the Queen, who, turning quickly, chucked her under the chin, and in her broken English, said she had come at the right time, for she could fit the waistcoat over the short skirt.

"It is good to see you, for I get nought but frowns and sulks from my Lady Buckingham, and such shakings of head and groanings! Ah! I must needs have a diversion, girl. They say I'm mad when I pirouette and dance. I should be melancholy mad if I did nothing but count my beads and say my Aves. Child, what is it?"

Amphyllis, who was putting on the Queen's vest, and finding it too narrow for her plump figure and thick waist, said she must rip it with scissors, and make it an inch wider under the arms.

"Then," said the Queen, throwing herself back, "do it here, and converse the while. I see you rarely, Mistress Windham: wherefore?"

"Please your Majesty, I come when you command me."

"Your husband is not with the Court, Amphyllis," the Queen continued. "Are you not ready to be received into the Church? Does that anger him?"

"Your Majesty," said poor Amphyllis, struggling for composure, "dreadful rumours have reached me.

Sir Christopher is, they say, seeking another lady in the City, with huge wealth, and—— Oh! your Majesty, pity me, for I fear me that marriage will never be acknowledged publicly, and I fear me I am lost through trickery and deceit.”

The Queen was unfeignedly sorry.

“It shall not be, an’ I can help it. Father Pedro shall be summoned.”

“Alas! your Majesty, he is dead, and there was but one witness, who was a boon companion.”

In the Queen’s ignorance, she did not at once see the grave position in which Amphyllis was placed.

“Profess yourself a daughter of the Church, with all haste, my own dear Father Confessor will instruct you further. I will interpret as I can, for he speaks no English.”

“Nay, your Majesty, nay; my heart is turned more and more to my own faith, the faith of many I love well. I cannot take up doctrines I think harmful.”

The Queen but imperfectly understood what Amphyllis said, but she watched her curiously, and with a sort of subtle sympathy, she scarce knew why.

“Say, child, did you love that man?”

Then Amphyllis threw down the fine waistcoat, and going to the Queen, she knelt down by her side.

"Your Majesty, I thought I loved him; he swore such love to me; he heaped so many grand things on me. He told me I was his angel of deliverance; that when near me, he could fain be a saint; when apart from me, a sinner. He vowed that I was free to follow my own religion. He pointed to His Majesty as an example, leaving your Highness to worship as a good Catholic, he said——"

"Poor soul, poor Amphyllis," the word from the Queen's lips was all but impossible. "Poor soul; nay, but I will help you if I can. He shall be commanded to return. I will set good Sir Bernard on him. I will command that he take you for his beautiful wife before the King and Court. I will——"

"Alas! your Majesty," said Amphyllis, "you may do this in your royal pleasure, but you cannot make him love me."

"That is truth, that is truth," said the Queen; "but, child, we women, queen or lower folk, must learn to live without love."

"Nay, then," said Amphyllis, clasping her hands, and rising from her knees, "your Majesty, I *cannot* live without it. I had the real jewel once, and I flung it away. I have believed in a sham in its place, and——"

"Mistress Windham, you are over bold." It was

my Lady Sanderson's voice. "Return to your duties ; there are many awaiting you."

Amphyllis took up the gaudy waistcoat, and retired with a certain quiet dignity, which would have touched a kinder heart than Lady Sanderson's.

"Do not chide her ; she has a sad heart," said the Queen ; "and now to get rid of mine own."

And the means poor Catherine took for that end, was on this occasion to dress herself, and her ladies, like the peasants in the Court masques, instead of from the reality of the country folks' appearance, of which none of the Court ladies knew anything, and start to the Saffron, Walden Fair.

What befell them there is matter of history, and how the good old Sir Bernard Gascoigne had much trouble to guide his "sorry jade," on which he sat behind the Queen on a pillion, through the rough mob which soon surrounded the royal party.

In vain Sir Bernard asked for a pair of gloves stitched with blue for his sweetheart, and the Queen, in her broken lingo, for a pair of yellow stockings for her's at one of the booths, and tried to imitate the rustic's manner and behaviour. While the beautiful Frances, Duchess of Richmond, "La belle Stuart," as she was called, struck the Essex and Suffolk folk, as someone not by right attired in that fantastic "gabardine."

At last someone in the crowd, which pressed around the booths, having seen the Queen at a state banquet, recognised her large black eyes, olive skin, and raven hair, and eagerly proclaimed the fact. Thus the mystery was unravelled.

The royal party had to beat a hasty retreat, so surrounded were they at once by the eager people, who, not to be cheated of so unexpected "a gape" at royalty, mounted their own pillions, and with wives and sweethearts attended the Queen and her train to the very gates of Audley End, greatly to her and her ladies confusion.*

The King's jests and Buckingham's repartees about this frolic of the Queen, no doubt were the enlivening element of that evening's banquet, which was one of the most magnificent ever provided by a subject for his sovereign.

There was another sadder heart at Audley End than Queen Catherine's, but Amphyllis Windham turned away with disgust from the merry party setting out for the fair, and sought the lovely glades of the park, where the bracken was taking the first rich colouring of gold and bronze, and the deer lying amongst it scarcely started as her light footfall

* The account of the Queen's visit to Saffron Walden Fair is related in a letter from Mr. Henshaw to Sir Robert Paston of Oxnead.

touched the grass and the fallen leaves in the woodland paths with but a faint rustle as she passed. The sylvan beauties of the park, the stillness of the autumn day—that stillness which so often comes before a storm sweeps down the leaves from the trees—was soothing to Amphyllis.

The state of repressed fear and mistrust that she was not the real wife of Sir Christopher Talbot seemed too intolerable to bear much longer. She was going to Norwich ; there were those there in whom she could trust, if she only dare. For where could she find a more able adviser than Doctor Thomas Browne ? But alas ! she had wronged his son, the son whom he prized and loved so well. How could she seek him, and throw herself on his kindness ?

“Be sure,” Edward had said, when he sought an interview with her at Whitehall, “as you renounced my brother, so do we as a family renounce you.”

Then there was Andrew ; Andrew, who was so precise and stiff, who had warned her often that love of the world could only bring sorrow and pain. How could she go to him with her tale ? Bridget, quiet, patient Bridget, *she* would not spurn her, but Andrew was lord of the little cottage at Ford End and everything in it ; she could not set herself up in opposition to Andrew, and Bridget could not receive

her against his will. Then there was Mary, "sweet Moll," with her luminous eyes and mobile face, varying with every feeling that swept over her. She had loved Amphyllis dearly, but she had loved Tom better.

Amphyllis recalled how she had done her best to dissuade her from accepting the offer made through the Bendish family of a post under Mistress Moore, who was Lady Sanderson's niece.

"Do not leave us," Moll had said; "when Tom comes home he will grieve to find you gone. Do not leave us."

But Amphyllis had laughed, and said:

"To leave you for six months or a year is not leaving for ever."

How many months, how many years had passed? She could not count them. They seemed, as she looked back, like one dazzling, feverish dream. Just as on that autumn day it was in vain to cheat herself into the belief that it was spring, so was it impossible to her to realise that she could be the same Amphyllis Windham who in borrowed finery had learned the steps of the minuet in the Doctor's spacious hall, and first tasted the sweets of being the centre of attraction to those assembled.

Perhaps after all Andrew was right. All these

vanities, whether in the Duke's Palace or the Doctor's house, were sinful, and led to misery. They had led her to misery, and with no helper near.

Tired with her long ramble, Amphyllis seated herself on the felled trunk of an old oak, which had evidently been recently cut down.

A little squirrel swinging from branch to branch of another tree near by, looked down at Amphyllis with an inquiring glance from his beady, black eyes. She was so still that the squirrel took courage, and running down the trunk, ventured near enough to Amphyllis to take possession of an acorn which had fallen from one of the prostrate branches.

The squirrel nibbled his acorn in peace, for Amphyllis did not move. Presently the squirrel took alarm at an advancing step, and in another minute a man appeared, with a bronzed face and a good deal of dark hair hanging over his doublet.

Instinctively Amphyllis sprang to her feet, when the stranger doffing his cap, said :

" I crave pardon for trespassing. I am a stranger, and have only landed at Harwich a day or two since. I have inquired my way at the woodman's cottage, and find I must pursue this path to the main road."

The tone of the stranger was respectful, and Amphyllis was reassured.

"I am on my way to my Lord of Suffolk's mansion," she said, "where I tarry in the train of Her Majesty Queen Catherine."

"The King had not yet come back to his own when I left England," was the reply. "There was no Queen then."

"They were bad times," Amphyllis said.

"Are these better?" was the quickly-spoken question. "Is God better feared and served, or are the old landmarks swept away, as report saith, by the King himself?"

"Sir, I am a loyal servant of His Majesty. It would not beseem me to speak aught against the reigning sovereign."

"That is prettily spoken," was the reply; "but, madam, what has reached my ears since I set foot on English ground only makes me more anxious to quit it. At least, in the New World—in the New England of that New World—we serve God without restraint. We are not ashamed of our badge. We pray aloud to Heaven for daily needs. We lead simple lives, apart from gauds and follies. Driven forth as we were to seek a new home, not knowing whither we went, we can rejoice in that we win the scorn and contempt of men, seeing the Lord has been mindful of His own, and we have freedom to worship God."

There was something noble and striking in the man's bearing which inspired Amphyllis with respect.

"I am come hither," he went on, "on a sacred mission. As soon as I have performed that mission I shall return. I am on my way to Norwich."

"To Norwich!" Amphyllis said. "The Court moves thitherward to-morrow, stopping on the way for entertainment at my Lord of Arlington's, at Easton Hall."

"I haunt not Courts," was the reply. "My chosen friends are not to be found in kings' palaces. I go to Norwich to seek one Dr. Thomas Browne, a man of much repute, whose book, called '*Religio Medici*,' provoked comment and criticism by Sir Kenelm Digby when I was a boy. But our paths part here. That gate leads to the King's high road. Farewell, mistress; you seem to me to have trouble written on your fair face. Most like it cometh from the service of the world, which is hard bondage. Take another yoke on you, and learn of One who is meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest unto your soul, for His yoke is easy, and His burden light."

Before Amphyllis could say another word, the stranger had leaped over the gate and was gone.



NEWS FROM THE FAR WEST.

"THE King is expected at Norwich by Thursday at latest." Bridget looked up from the skein of worsted she was disentangling as her brother spoke, and said :

"There will be a great rout and rabble in the city and neighbourhood. The time is ill-chosen, for the great Michaelmas fair makes all folks busy, and there is the hiring of serving-men and maids, and——"

Andrew Whitelock here interrupted his sister :

"Have you not heard that the whole Court will be in His Majesty's train, and amongst them——" Andrew paused, so seldom did he allow that name to pass his lips in any conversation, though it was often enough in his prayers.

"Amphyllis Windham you would say, Andrew. Dear Amphyllis, well-a-day ! It will be nought to me whether she is in Norwich or not. She, a grand lady now, will scarce care to make any sign

to simple folk like us." Bridget sighed, and bent her head over the tangled skein, not trusting herself to say more.

But Andrew rose, and pacing up and down the sitting-room, with his hands clasped at his back, as was his custom when greatly moved, he said: "Bridget, an attempt must be made to rescue that poor child from the evil."

"It would be vain to try, Andrew, to bring her back. Did you not fail to move her? Did not Mr. Edward Browne report her hard as a stone when he sought to bring her to return? No, it is quite vain; think no more of it, Andrew."

"Think!" exclaimed Andrew. "Methinks I have but one thought and prayer, that Amphyllis may be delivered from the worldly spell which hath blinded her eyes and hardened her heart. I will see her, though she be in the train of a king and queen, who bring mischief and sorrow to this unhappy land. I will find the lamb and bring her home to the fold from the jaws of the lion. I will do it publicly in the face of the world."

"Nay, now, Andrew; there will only be a scene, and you will be worsted. Amphyllis will resent your interfering, as she ever did. You had best take counsel with the Doctor."

"I have already spoken of this to Mary Browne, that letter which tells of Amphyllis, gives me hope if she could be overcome by the hearing of my teaching, it is a token that there is a melting process at work, methinks. But, whatever happens, I will never rest till I recover that lost one."

Bridget shook her head, and could only say: "I fear me that will never be." And her brother, taking up his Bible, went out on his mission amongst the poor and the sorrowful; for it might be truly said that he was instant in season and out of season; and crowds came to listen to him, whether he spoke in his own little meeting-house or in the low courts of the city.

This afternoon as he passed along the familiar road towards the city gates, he saw the excitement and tumult were on the increase. Every one was hastening to complete the preparations for the royal visit. A large tent was erected by the order of the Mayor in Chapel-le-Field, where the Lord Lieutenant of Norwich and Norfolk, and the Deputy Lieutenant of the City were to inspect the regiments which were to form part of the procession.

Country folks were flocking in with all kinds of provisions to meet the demand for food, which so many strangers would necessarily cause.

The market-place was thronged, and the shouting, talking, and bargaining were almost deafening. In the Castle precincts, the workmen had hardly yet completed their herculean labour in removing the "dunghills and nuisances," which was one of the orders in the council as needful before the King's visit.

"Yonder is one good effect of His Majesty's visit, Master Whitelock," a voice near him said. And Andrew, turning, saw Arthur Dee.

"Methinks, like the purging fire which stayed the Plague in London, this royal visit may be of similar use here."

"There is need," said Andrew, "but the lower parts by Pockthorpe and St. Faith's are in worse plight."

"Are you turning thither now?" asked Arthur Dee; "if so, I will join company with you. We shall see what is to be seen at the Duke's Palace as we pass."

Andrew assented, and the two men made their way through the crowd, and passing the Duke's Palace, saw all was life and activity there. The alterations were completed, and only a few finishing details of decoration remained to be done. Only one month had passed since the orders had been given, and now the transformation was complete. Lord Henry Howard had spared no money and no trouble, and the interior arrangements were indeed magnificent.

One of the gentlemen of Lord Henry Howard, who was known to Arthur Dee, invited him and Andrew to inspect the new rooms and kitchens which had been erected on the old tennis court and bowling-green ; but Andrew drew back, saying that his business was pressing, and that he would as lief turn away his eyes from such vanities.

"He is a fine fellow, Puritan though he be," said Arthur Dee, as Andrew departed. "There is something of the saint and apostle in him ; and the poor folk, as I know right well, are ready to kiss the ground he walks on."

"So I have heard," said the gentleman, who was Mr. Tours ; "but I would he were not so strait-laced, and had more charity for us poor folk, who love to take what pleasure we can out of this poor life."

"Aye," said Arthur gravely ; "but somehow that pleasure is not over-satisfying. It comes, and we try to grasp it, and then it is but a shadow."

"Well, having had much ado in preparation for the King's visit, I mean to get all I can out of it. You will be here at the banquet to-morrow. Invitations are general. There is plenty for His Majesty to do—to touch for the King's Evil, say his prayers in church, and feast with the Mayor at the Guild Hall ; dub him knight, and praise the beauty of my lady his wife."

"There's labour mixed with the pleasures of royalty," said Arthur Dee, as he was leaving the Palace.

"Aye, it is a work-a-day world, and yet a mighty pleasant one," said Mr. Tours, gaily. "That dark-eyed fellow yonder has haunted me to-day. He is here, there, and everywhere. Methinks he is a spy."

"Hush!" said Arthur Dee, "he will hear you ; and it is ill manners to fix a character on a man without sufficient warrant."

Nevertheless Arthur Dee was not without misgivings, when he found himself followed by the stranger, and at last touched on the shoulder by him.

"I am seeking one Dr. Thomas Browne," he said ; "the City is in such an uproar that I can scarce find my way, and my senses seem dull. Where is the Doctor to be found?"

Arthur Dee turned, and looked straight into the stranger's face. It was a good face, and all his suspicions vanished.

"Dr. Browne's house is in the Market Square," he said. "He will see you on business early in the morning."

"Is he a friend of yours ? Are you well acquainted with him ?"

"Yes, he is my best friend," was the reply.

"Ah, then I will tell you that I am from New England. I sailed forth as a boy in the "*May Flower*," and God has prospered me. We have several colonies there of God-fearing men. We plough and sow, and the trees provide timber for our homes. We live a simple, patriarchal life, and are from time to time joined by those who, weary of all the folly and wickedness in this country, come to seek repose and purity of life and manners, where as yet the serpent hath not left his loathsome trail."

The crowd began now to be so thick as they neared the Market Place, that Arthur Dee was separated from his companion, and when he looked round he had disappeared.

"What can he want of the Doctor, I wonder. I wish I had asked him the question. He is a strange-looking fellow, but honest, I am sure."

The King and Queen entered the city on September 28th, by different routes. Thus there had to be a division of the escort prepared; and while the Mayor and Aldermen, and two hundred young citizens, waited His Majesty's coming at Trowse Bridge, with their present of two hundred guineas, all ready to offer, Lord Henry Howard, sent his sons, and a long train, in the opposite direction, to meet Her

Majesty, who had not gone with the King to Yarmouth, but had stayed at Arlington without him.

The Cringleford Road was lined with people, and the high banks which shut in the gardens of Ford End Cottage had been climbed with great difficulty by old Mistress Howse from the Mill, her grandson, Joan, and Bridget.

Bridget had at first declared she had no mind to gape at royalty, but suddenly her mind changed. If Amphyllis were in the Queen's train, she might catch a glimpse of her as she passed.

The weather was not propitious, and rain was beginning to fall, when the avant-couriers rode in sight, and the young scions of the house of Norfolk gave the word to their followers to halt, while they themselves rode forward to meet the coaches.

The Queen's came second, and was distinguished by the royal arms and other gay trappings. She was attended by Lady Buckingham and Lady Suffolk, and seemed to enjoy the cheers and acclamations of the people. Her Majesty smiled graciously at the party planted on the wall; and old Mistress Howse, to her latest day, related, for the benefit of her grandchildren, that Her Majesty had fixed her black eyes on *her*, and that the gracious royal smile was *her* property—a sort of shadowy heirloom to illuminate

the future records of the miller's family—that Queen Catherine smiled and bowed to Mistress Howse, on the 28th day of September, 1671.

“It was meant for the lot,” Joan muttered ; “I’ve no patience with such stuck-up folly.”

But now the coach containing my Lady Sanderson, and the maids rolled, or rather jolted, slowly past. Coaches in those days were not too swift in their motion, nor were the roads calculated to render travelling particularly easy.

In the first coach, set apart for the maids, one of their number sat with clasped hands, and a rigid colourless face.

She knew every familiar object as it came in sight ; the poplars by the mill—their pointed tops swaying in the dull damp air ; the little foot-bridge, the old moss-grown wheel, the dovecot, where the pigeons were collecting, with rounded breasts, and heads drawn back, making their low guttural coo ;—the elm tree, where the rooks built in spring, now coloured in the lower boughs with bright orange, that colour which tells indeed of swift-coming decay, but is so beautiful in September days. Then, as the coach slowly wound along the road, she knew that the cottage was on the left, and that its red roof, painted with lichen in every shade of gold and brown, would soon appear

over the high wall and bank which shut in the garden.

Margery Price's voice roused her from dreams to reality : " See there ! there are some old women on that wall, nodding and bowing, and grimacing ; such quaint creatures ! Look, Amphyllis ! "

Amphyllis gave one quick glance, and then hid her face in her hands, and shuddering, said : " I cannot, cannot look. "

Margery did not press her to do so. She had some dim idea that the deep heart trouble of which Amphyllis sometimes spoke, was connected with Norwich. But sympathy for Amphyllis did not hinder little Margery from enjoying the slow progress they made. The cheering of the people, the ringing of St. Peter's bells, answered by those of many City churches, the firing of salutes, the gay concourse all around—was delightful to the little maid who had but lately been enrolled amongst the ladies in attendance on Her Majesty.

The crowd thickened as the coaches drew near the Duke's Palace, and here the King and Queen joined company, and, alighting, were received by the noble master of the Palace, and escorted to their rooms.

It would take too long to tell of all the festivities which followed.

The King was in the best possible spirits, and the next morning went through all that was expected of him with that pleasant easy manner which even those who were displeased with him for many and repeated failures of duty as a king, and a husband, found it hard to resist.

The Doctor's mansion did not escape the general enthusiasm and excitement which prevailed, and was filled with guests, who had arrived to be present during the royal visit.

Every one was stirring before the sun was up on St. Michael's Day, and Mistress Browne was, by seven o'clock, superintending the toilettes of herself and her daughters, that they might be in readiness to accompany her to the Cathedral, where the King was to begin the programme of the day.

Mary was attired in the same elaborate costume as her unmarried sister, while Mistress Fairfax was resplendent in the stiffest satin and velvet, and ruffles of costly lace, that were amongst the treasures of her wardrobe when she married.

"Father said we were all to accompany him to the Cathedral; but methinks I would fain rest quiet till the time arrives to go up to the Guild Hall."

"It will be good for you, Moll, to see something of

the world," said Mistress Fairfax. "Mother is of the same mind."

Mary, who looked more ethereal than ever in her pale saffron-coloured sarcenet, with an overmantle of green velvet, elaborately worked with small pearls, and with a good deal of lace hanging round her slender throat and falling from her head-dress, shook her head.

"I would fain remain at home in quiet," she pleaded; and the Doctor, when consulted, said:

"Let her do as she feels best. She is so weakly that I would not press her into any service against her power."

By eight o'clock the house was nearly empty. Host and hostess and their guests had all departed, after a substantial breakfast, to the Cathedral, some on foot and some in the Doctor's coaches.

Only old Jonas remained in the Hall on watch, and a few servants in the kitchen department, who were to take their turns in the royal festivities later in the day.

Mary was tired with rising early, and tired with the stiffness of her somewhat elaborate dress, which her married sister, Mistress Fairfax, had chosen for her. It was certainly very pretty and becoming, "and vanity is said to feel no pinch;" but Mary was not vain; she had so resolutely set her face in the direction of another world, never believing that her days

on earth would be many, that dress and all its appliances were of but little importance to her. She was sitting, or rather lying, upon a wide settle, piled with cushions, thinking over the past, and oblivious as to the present, when Jonas's voice in the hall, louder than usual, made her raise herself; and listen eagerly.

Then there was silence, and Mary thought that Jonas had only been dismissing some unfortunate patient, and telling him that her father, for that day at least, could see no one.

There was the sound of many voices and the trample of many feet without, for the King was expected at the Guild Hall immediately after the service in the Cathedral, and those who had been disappointed of getting a good view of him there, were flocking up towards the Market Place, for it was expected that His Majesty would appear on the balcony before the Guild Hall.

Presently Mary thought she would open the door and look out into the hall, to ascertain to whom Jonas was speaking.

But she had scarcely reached it, when it opened hastily, and a man in a plain dark coat of homespun, well opened at the throat, and turned down to display a wide linen collar, pushed past Jonas, who was evidently trying to detain him.

"I wish to see you, Mistress Browne," the man said, "on business of great importance. Methinks serving-men in England have not increased in civil behaviour since I left it."

Something in the stranger's manner gave Mary confidence, while Jonas was muttering and threatening behind.

"My father is full of his duties to his sovereign to-day," Mary said; "may it please you to defer your interview with him for a short space."

"Nay, Mistress," was the reply, "if you give me a few minutes' hearing that will satisfy me. I am—alas! that I should have to say it—I *was*, the friend of your brother, Master Tom Browne."

Mary's pale face was flushed with crimson, as she said:

"My brother! Oh! do you bring news of him?"

The stranger smiled sadly, and drew from the deep pouch he wore at his girdle, a knot of faded cherry-coloured ribbon and a small packet, which evidently contained something particularly precious.

"He committed these treasures to me when he lay dying of the fever, which has—but, Mistress Browne," the man exclaimed, frightened by the deathly pallor which overspread Mary's face—"but, Mistress, I pray

you ask for grace to rejoice, and do not sorrow as one without hope."

Poor Mary rallied herself with a great effort, and said :

"Sir, my brother Tom was very dear to us; he was noble and brave."

"Mistress Browne," the man said, "you need not tell me, John Falconer, of his virtues. He was my dear friend and companion, and few knew his worth better. If you can bear it, I will give you the history of the years lying between 1667 and the present time as best I can."

Mary bowed her head in token of assent, and John Falconer began.

"The sun was sinking over the great forests of the West, where I lived, with my father and a few chosen ones, when a stranger approached by a path cut in the undergrowth, and craved a night's lodging. Such requests are frequent enough, and I was struck with the whole bearing and manner of this stranger. When rested and refreshed with food, we entered into much converse, and he told me he had come out to bury a sore and wounded heart in the new country, escaping observation for a time, till the said wound was healed. He fully intended to have returned to you last spring; but God willed it other-

wise. Fever came to our little settlement, my father sickened and died, and my mother, an aged woman, and my sister, both fell under the destroyer's hand. Your noble brother went about in our little colony with unsparing diligence. He worked beyond his strength, as I now know ; but I myself was laid low, and could not restrain him. Once, when I noticed his countenance to be wasted somewhat, I urged him, from my own sick-bed, to spare himself. Then there came a wonderful light in his eyes, as he said :

“ ‘Nay, then, God wills I should “do the next thyng,” and you must not hinder me, good Falconer.’ The ‘next thyng’ was to face a raging storm of wind and rain, to go to carry to the most distant part of our settlement some fever physic to a house where all were laid low. He went forth, with that light in his eyes of which I spake just now, and a fortnight later a messenger came from a log cabin midway between the Falcon’s Nest, as we call our place, and that distant farm whither he had gone, to summon me to his dying-bed.”

‘Oh, Tom! honest Tom!’ Mary exclaimed ; “ever the same—ever the same true, noble heart!”

“Aye, Mistress Browne, you are right ; but let me tell you that that noble heart, touched by God’s grace, was even more noble than when you knew your

brother. But I must proceed,—I was weak with recent illness, and could scarce get my legs across my horse's back ; but I did not tarry, and made my way to the log cabin, erected by one of our woodmen in the depths of the forest. The sun was casting slant beams upon the clearing through the tall branches of the trees when I reached the spot. 'You are in time,' Jabez Short said ; 'you are in time : but he is sinking.' There, in the humble cabin, I found your brother, death was on his face ; but what a death ! He welcomed me with a smile, and said, 'Well, Falconer, the next thing to do is to die ; but God giveth the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' Then he drew a pouch from under the rough pillows of dried grass covered with canvas, against which he was propped up. I had noticed that small pouch often, for he wore it always. His fingers were so weak he could scarce fit the key ; but at last it opened. 'See,' he said, 'I charge you to seek out my father, Dr. Thomas Browne, of Norwich, and say to him, with my duty, that I loved him and revered him and my mother to the last. He must not take it amiss that I came hither to bury my sorrow. I always hoped to go back to them all, and see the old home once more. But I need not discuss this now ; this letter to my father and mother

tells all. Deliver it into my father's hand.' Then he proceeded with greater difficulty to pray me to see one Amphyllis Windham, and deliver to her this faded knot of ribbon and the packet containing a ring, and say to her, 'that though her hand had pierced his heart with a barbed arrow, the Great Healer had cured the smart, and that he left her his undying love and his blessing.'

Moll's tears, which at first had seemed pent up with the announcement John Falconer had made, now found free course, and her overcharged heart was relieved.

"It is well to weep," John Falconer said, "for it is stony grief that kills ; and, Mistress Browne, you may be sure God sends the relief of tears to the stricken one as His gift. Your noble brother mentioned *you* with tenderest affection. He said, 'Tell her to seek out Amphyllis, and to be kind to her for my sake.'"

"Ah, that I could only do so !" Moll exclaimed. "She is, perchance, in the Queen's train of maids ; but she will have nought to do of us."

"Poor soul !" sighed John Falconer ; "she needs your prayers."

"Is there more to hear ?" Moll asked, "is there more ?"

"But little ; he wandered somewhat after the exertion of giving me these directions. He talked of the sea-fights, and said the bullets were whistling all

round. It was only the whistle of the evening wind in the tree tops.

"Then he said he was passing under an old gateway, and bid me see the word 'Yenk' shining there in letters of gold. Soon he said the gateway was the gate of the city, and that the Lord's hand had written there the word for his comfort. 'For,' saith he, '*He cannot forget.*' There was a most marvellous light in his face as he said this, and then once more her name, Amphyllis. Presently he shuddered, and said a cold blast had come through the gateway. It was the chill blast of death, for not long after, he, grasping my hand, sighed gently, and in that sigh his spirit fled. And do we well to grieve that one so noble and so great as your brother truly was died thus? His victory over self was greater than victory over the Dutch. He died as his Master died, for others' sake. Grudge him not the honour, nor say that his crown is less brilliant in its shining than had he fallen on the deck of the 'Foresight,' covered with what the world calls glory."

"I thank you, sir," said Moll, "for your words of cheer. I bless God that my brother had a friend like you. You will tarry here till they return from the shows and pageants in which I am not strong enough to partake, and tell my father all you have told me."

"But this Amphyllis, I must seek her out; and how

shall we find her? and how shall we get the precious packet containing, as he said, a ring with a posy within it, delivered to her?"

"Oh! Amphyllis!" Moll said; "but I pray you, sir, to rest till my father return, and I will order you refreshment."

"I need but simple fare," was the answer, "but if you will permit me I would fain seek another chamber, and leave you to your own thoughts and your heart sorrow, with which no stranger can intermeddle."

The delicate consideration which this showed, affected Mary more than many words.

"I marvel not, sir, that you were my brother's friend," she said, and then stepping towards a shutter, which covered an aperture into the servants' quarters, she called a servant to show a gentleman who desired to see her father, into the library, and supply him there with all needful refreshment while he awaited his return.

The enthusiasm of the good folk of Norwich reached a climax when, on nearing the Cathedral and Bishop's Palace, the King came out on the balcony of the Guild Hall, and bowed and smiled to the crowds assembled, saying to Lord Cornebury, who stood next him, that he had never seen trainbands to greater advantage, nor any city more loyal than Norwich.

After this demonstration his Majesty was prayed to resort to St. Andrew's Hall to meet the Queen, where a costly banquet awaited them, and a large number of guests were assembled to have the honour of partaking of the royal feast.

As it was scarcely eleven o'clock it is to be supposed that the King's exertions had given him an appetite; for he seems to have been in a most genial humour after the feast was over, declaring that the Mayor must come forward and be knighted, as a mark of his royal appreciation, of his reception at Norwich, and of the banquet, which, we are told, cost that worthy official and the corporation £900.

The King and Queen were seated on a dais at the upper end of the hall with their lords and ladies in waiting, while the boards for the guests were arranged in the body of that noble building, where in our own times royal personages have often presided, when the feast has been one of music and song, instead of rich viands and sparkling wine.

"Let Mr. Mayor approach," Charles said. "What hinders him?"

"Nay, sir," said Lord Cornebury, "there is no hindrance save the Mayor's will."

"Make known it is my pleasure to dub him at once. Sure he will not grudge me that satisfaction,

unless he fears my hand may be too heavy on his shoulders, eh?"

"Forsooth, sir," said Lord Philip Howard, "it is



modesty, not want of courage that holds back the Mayor."

"Modesty," laughed Charles. "I have heard of

many great virtues in Norwich, but I did not know Modesty was one. Mr. Mayor," the King said, raising his voice, "be not shamefaced, man; let me leave a mark of my visit with you."

Thus appealed to, there was nothing left but for the Mayor to come nearer His Majesty and, making as low and graceful a bow as his heavy scarlet cloak would allow, he said, in a low tone of mingled deprecation and fear, how his refusal might be taken by the King:

"May it please your Majesty, I would respectfully decline the honour which you are graciously pleased to offer to bestow on me. I am a plain citizen of Norwich; as such I have had the honour of receiving your Majesties, and as such I would remain; and as such I am no less your obedient servant and subject to the end."

"Verily," said the King, "you deserve a double honour for such a speech. It would ill beseem me to press upon you a token of favour which you feel would oppress you. I will see that you have one that suits you better."

"I tender humble thanks, to your Majesty, and I crave leave to name one, already distinguished beyond any of his fellow-citizens, and most respectfully to suggest that you confer the honour of knight-

hood on that distinguished physician and famous scholar, Dr. Thomas Browne."

"Well said, indeed, Mr. Mayor—well said. I see you are wise as well as modest, a rare combination,—eh, my Lord of Buckingham? Let the learned Doctor approach."

There was a murmur through the Hall of unfeigned satisfaction as the Doctor, escorted by the Chamberlain walked slowly, and with heightened colour, up to the dais.

"Ah! Master Browne; you will not give me the slip; and right glad I am to get the chance of making this sign of my esteem. I have heard of you as prominent in days long past. Were you not true to the King my father, as long back as 1643, and refused to subscribe to a fund those rebels were raising to regain Newcastle?"

"I had that honour, your Majesty."

"Ah! and you must have been a stripling then. You have found the secret of perpetual youth, Doctor. Your cheeks are unwrinkled, and your hair is not fresh from the perruquier's shop. Methinks I had best turn author, for I have more twinges, whether of gout or rheum, in my legs than is pleasant; but kneel now, good Doctor."

Then the plainly-dressed figure of the Doctor,

which formed such a contrast to the gorgeous robes of crimson velvet and satin around him, knelt at his sovereign's feet ; and Charles, giving a flat blow on either shoulder, with the sword handed to him by Sir William Pettigrew, said :

" Rise, Sir Thomas Browne ! "

Then kissing the King's hand, Sir Thomas Browne was leaving the dais, when the Duke of York said :

" May I crave your Majesty's leave to speak ? "

" Aye, verily, James, if your speech be short and to the point. "

" It is, that I would fain remind your Majesty that Sir Thomas Browne has served you in divers ways, and of one I am able to testify. The courage, valour, and undaunted bravery of his noble son, who served under me in the sea-fight against your enemies the Dutch, should surely receive a public acknowledgment. Never was there a braver young fellow, with a lion's heart within a breast that was yet tender as a woman's. "

" Bring your son hither, Doctor, " the King said. " I thank my brother of York for naming him. "

There was a momentary pause, and then Sir Thomas Browne, raising his head, and speaking in a clear resonant voice, said :

" Alas ! sir, of the son of whom his Highness the Duke

has spoken so graciously, we have had no tidings for four long years, and we mourn for him as dead."

The solemnity of the Doctor's manner, and the sad, wistful expression in his large earnest eyes seemed to check the King's ever ready rejoinder.

Then a sharp cry like that of a creature in pain, broke the silence, and a sudden commotion amongst the ladies in attendance on the Queen, caused some excitement ; while my Lady Sanderson exclaimed :

"Help here! we must bear her hence ; she must leave the Hall."

Then the newly-made knight went towards the place, and as the ladies stood aside, he raised in his arms the apparently lifeless form of Amphyllis Windham.



COME BACK.

THE sudden illness of one of the maids in Lady Sanderson's charge was not, as may be supposed, of sufficient importance to affect the movements of the Court. The Queen, indeed, was distressed and anxious that Amphyllis should be well cared for, of which Lady Sanderson, who returned to the Hall, assured her there was no doubt, as Amphyllis had been carried to the Doctor's house, in his own coach.

So the long train of lords and ladies set off for Blickling, where vast preparations had also been made, and where the entertainment was on a scale of princely magnificence.

Blickling Hall, the birth-place of Anne Boleyn, is one of the most beautiful ancestral homes of England, and the King was so well pleased with his reception there, that he again sought to testify it by knighting the eldest son of his host, Sir John Hobart, a boy who showed no reluctance to accept the honour as the worthy Mayor had done, but in the full spring

of his thirteen summers, thought it a fine thing indeed to be thus marked out for distinction by the title conferred on him by the King, when his father's guest at Blickling Hall.

A very quaint and amusing description of this royal visit to Norwich was written by the poet, Matthew Stevenson, in 1673, only two years later. It has a freshness and originality of expression, all its own, and will be welcome here rather than any further details of the progress of their Majesties which I might be able to give in my own words. The opening lines run thus :

“Next Norwich-ward great Cæsar sets his face,
Like sunshine to a long-benighted place,
The mounted magistrates to meet him rid,
And then formalities his welcome bid,
Where persons though confined to city ground,
Their love and loyalty yet knows no bound.”

This outburst of loyal enthusiasm is followed by more descriptive lines, when the entertainment and reception of the King and Queen, passes into the hands of the noble and distinguished house of Howard, from the inferior folk “who were confined to city ground.”

Their loyalty was doubtless a thing to rejoice in, as well as wonder at. Not so many years before those “confined to city ground,” in a city of the west, had

withstood the King's father to the last, and by persistence in the face of starvation had held that city and refused him an entrance, and thus turned the stream of the conflict against him, which at last engulfed him in its troubled waters.

His son might well be pleased to find the men of Norwich true to his cause, for, as he knew, to gain the favour of citizens was now more important than to gain the favour of dukes and nobles.

Matthew Stevenson's account of the noise and tumult in the city almost makes one's head ache even to read of:—

“And had you heard the tempest of their lungs,
You would have thought them nothing else but tongues;
Their vocal volleys deafened every ear,
And drums and trumpets in loud music were;
They rent the skies and tore the very ground.
Muskets and cannons in the *vogue* were drown'd;
And bells, that with such sweat and pains were reared,
Might have rung backward for aught they were heard.
'Twas such a clamour, so transcending measure,
That bells themselves could not appeal to Cæsar.”

For delicate nerves such ebullitions of loyalty must have been very trying, but “nerves” were not so easily affected, let us hope, in those days.

As we know, the King and Queen entered the city by different routes, to which the poet thus refers:—

“ Then the pair royal are together met,
And the Duke's palace more graced than ever yet,
When they conducted are into a room
Hung all with arras, fresh come off the loom ;
Adorn'd with all magnificence, and quite
Set round with flambeaux, made a day of night.
For supper—there, I beg to hold my peace,
Think what the eye, the ear, the taste would please ;
All that they had, nothing did want that night,
Except by too, too much, an appetite.
In summe the bill of fare, let him pronounce,
Knows what it is to treat two courts at once.
Paston and Hobart did bring in the meat,
Who the next day at their own houses treat.
Paston to Oxnead did his sovereign bring,
And, like Araunah, offered as a king ;
Blickling two monarchs and two queens has seen,
One king fetcht thence, another brought a queen ;
Great Townsend of the treats brought up the rear,
And doubly was my lord lieutenant there.
And now with Norwich, for whose sake I writ,
Let me conclude—Norwich did what was fit ;
Or, what with them was possible at least,
That city does enuff that does its best.
There the King knighted the so famous Browne,
Whose worth and learning to the world are known ;
They offer'd to the King at the New Hall
Banquets and guineas and their hearts withal ;
For Norwich, true, others may treat more high,
But, to her power, none more heartily.”

Mary Browne was surprised to hear her father's

voice in the hall, and went out to meet him. "What is it, father? Who is it?"

For the Doctor was slowly ascending the wide stairs with his burden in his arms.

"Father!" Mary said, following him, but not able to catch sight of the face, which was hidden from her. "Dear father, is it Nan or Bess?—but no, it is not their dress."

Still no word, as Mary followed her father to one of the guest chambers, and laid upon the bed the form of Amphyllis Windham. She had partially recovered, and fixed her large eyes—those beautiful eyes, now so sad and wistful—upon Mary.

"Amphyllis! Amphyllis!" she exclaimed; "is it indeed you at last?"

The Doctor turned towards Mary.

"Yes," he said, "and for his sake I will tend her, though my heart is pierced afresh by the sight of her. I will go to prepare a potion, which you must administer, Moll, for I must return to the hall. Thy mother and thy sisters go by invitation to Blickling, whither their Majesties are bound, and I must needs accompany them, and bring them back."

"Oh! father," Moll said, following him to the door, "there waits in the library a man, named John Falconer, and he has brought tokens from Tom."

"Honest Tom! At last—"

"Nay, dear father," said Moll, "the tokens come from the very far-off land, for he is, as we thought, dead."

It was but the confirmation of the fears of four long years, but the Doctor covered his face for a moment, and a bitter groan broke from him. "My son! my son!"

Then, as Mary put her arms round her father, he said:—

"Strange and sad is the news to come to me to-day. The king has made thy father a knight, sweet Moll. Poor indeed seem the distinctions the world gives at any time—how much poorer now! A man is waiting, you say, Moll, to see me. I must summon thy mother and sisters; it will be ill news for them. Is it well accredited, sweet Moll?"

"Ah! yes, dear father, for he brings tokens in his hand, tokens that cannot be set aside. In a packet, only to be opened by Amphyllis, is the sapphire ring he put on her finger—my mother's ring, with the posy within, 'Doe the next thynges.'"

The Doctor disappeared, and Mary returned to Amphyllis's side. The bed was in a recess, as was often the case in the bedchambers of those days, and quite apart from the rest of the room.

Moll looked down on poor Amphyllis with eyes in which a divine pity shone, and taking one of her hands in hers, she said :

“Can I do aught for you?”

“Nay,” Amphyllis said, “you cannot mend a broken heart ; you cannot bring back a wasted life.”

“That is true,” Moll said ; “but God can heal the deepest wounds.”

Presently Amphyllis said :

“I heard you name *him*, your brother. I heard the Doctor say in the hall that he was dead : that he mourned for him as dead. Ah ! would that I were dead, out of this sorrowful life.”

“God’s time is best, for death or life,” was Moll’s answer.

Then the two girls kept silence.

The bells in the church towers rang out a continuous peal, and the ever-surgings crowd of people without, made that murmur which always tells of a moving multitude.

The beautiful dress which Amphyllis wore was all disarranged, her hair had fallen from its confinement under the stiff coiffure, and lay around her like a golden cloud as she lay passive and motionless.

After a few minutes the Doctor reappeared, he

held a cup in his hand, which contained a reviving draught, and advancing to the bed, said :

“Take this draught, and prepare to see one who brings you a message from the dead—my dead son.”

The grave, dignified air of the Doctor, so different from the caressing manner of days past, seemed to give Amphyllis strength. Loving and tender words would have broken her down; she sat up, and slipping down from the bed, said :

“I am well now. I cannot stay here ; I think—I think I will go to Andrew and Bridget Whitelock.”

“You must remain here for the present. Take what I desire you, and then I will conduct you to one who waits for you below.”

It was at all times impossible to gainsay the Doctor. Amphyllis took the cup and swallowed the draught, threw back the masses of her hair, and prepared to follow Sir Thomas Browne from the room.

Mary now came near her and said gently :

“Put your hand in my arm,” for she saw that with every effort Amphyllis trembled and tottered as she walked. “Do not turn away from me, Amphyllis,” she whispered, “I love you still.”

“Ah me ! but you have small cause,” was the

reply. But involuntarily, and as if by a simultaneous impulse, the two girls exchanged a kiss of penitence on the one side, and forgiveness on the other.

When the library door opened, and John Falconer advanced to meet the Doctor and Amphyllis, he started back. "We have met before!" he exclaimed. "Little did I suppose that in the park at Audley End, I was standing face to face with her whose name was one of the last to pass the lips of my noble friend!" Amphyllis stood like a prisoner to hear her doom, with bowed head and clasped hands, not daring to lift her eyes to John Falconer or Sir Thomas Browne.

In a few words the story which John Falconer had told that day, first to Mary, and afterwards to her father, was repeated. He gave the packet into Amphyllis's hand, and the knot of faded ribbon. He prayed her, in his simple Puritan fashion, to live for God henceforth, and renounce the evil world with all its gauds and finery, and to turn to God with weeping, fasting, and mourning.

Amphyllis stood like a statue, with the ribbon and packet in her hand; she shed no tear, she made no sign of feeling, while Mary's sobs were audible. Dame Dorothy Browne and her daughters, summoned from the festive scenes of the Court by a messenger,

came in to hear the tidings and particulars of Tom's death, and broke forth into natural grief, but Amphyllis was mute and motionless.

The less noble natures of Mistress Fairfax and Elizabeth Browne could not look on Amphyllis with anything but indignation, and in the midst of their grief they could not yet forgive her, whom they looked upon as the cause of their brother's early death in that distant land.

Before the evening's shadows lengthened, the mansion of the newly created knight was closed to all guests. Mourning garments had to be prepared to take the place of the festal ones. The shadow of death lay upon the house, though the dead was so far away, buried under the forest trees of the Far West, in a strange country. Slowly and sadly Amphyllis had at last turned to leave the room. Mary would have followed her, but she motioned her to remain behind. Evidently she made an effort to speak, but her parched lips refused to utter a sound, and Dame Dorothy Browne's last words seemed to fall on her like lead.

"Nay, let her go, Moll, let her go. Do not follow her. It is meet that she should taste the bitter cup alone, of which she has given us to drink so deep a draught. May God forgive her."

"Amen," said the Doctor, "amen."

"And," said Mary gently, "let *us* forgive, as we hope to be forgiven."

The tumult of the city was greatest that Michaelmas evening near the Duke's Palace. The Queen had returned thither from Blickling, leaving the King to go to Oxnead with the Duke of York and other noblemen. The tide set in so strongly towards the centre of interest in the lower parts of the city that the upper streets were comparatively quiet and deserted.

The little village of Cringleford, through which the Queen's train had passed the day before, was now almost in its normal condition. It lay out of the beat of the throng of sightseers, and only a few of its very few inhabitants were astir, as in the gathering shadows a woman's figure stopped at the gates of Ford End Cottage, and pushing them open, passed into the garden.

Andrew Whitelock was seated in the parlour reading, by the light of a small oil lamp, the large Bible which was open before him. The shutters were not closed, and Andrew could be clearly seen from the garden by anyone outside.

The evening was damp and dreary, and the late rain had saturated everything with moisture, while the ground was covered with freshly-fallen leaves.

Amphyllis paused and gazed at Andrew for a few moments, afraid to enter the porch, and dreading that Andrew should raise his head and see her standing there. But he was so engrossed with his study that the little noise her footsteps made on the fallen leaves did not attract his attention. After two or three minutes had elapsed Amphyllis entered the porch. The door was open, and the next moment she was standing in the hall. Joan's voice was heard from the kitchen, singing a lugubrious hymn-tune in her harsh, discordant voice, while the whirr of a spinning-wheel kept up a sort of accompaniment, and Amphyllis knew that Bridget had taken her wheel to the kitchen, glad to be near the wood fire, which cast a lurid glare through the open door at the side of the hall.

The door of the parlour was closed, and Amphyllis, gently turning the handle, was in the presence of Andrew Whitelock.

Andrew looked up from the book, and peering past the light cast by the lamp into the shadows beyond, saw a woman's figure standing there, without at first recognising her. It was no unusual thing for people to come to seek counsel and help from Andrew, and he said calmly, "Can I do aught for you? What is your name?"

Amphyllis now came nearer, and said :

“Andrew, do you not know me? I am come home—at last!”

Andrew was at first silent from the shock of surprise, and then he said, rising and lifting his hand as if in blessing :

“Thank God! I have prayed for this, and He has heard my prayer. ‘His holy name be praised.’”

Poor Amphyllis flung herself on her knees by the old oak chair from which Andrew had risen, and faltered: “Let me tell you all; let no one else hear.”

Then Andrew went to the door and locked it, to secure himself from interruption, closed the shutters, and lifting Amphyllis gently from the ground, placed her in the chair from which he had risen, and with infinite pity in his voice, said: “Has the storm of the world been too rough for you, Amphyllis—has the yoke you chose been bitter bondage?”

“Do not be too hard on me, Andrew, or my heart will break—it has come very nigh it now. Oh, I would give everything I ever possessed of this world’s gauds and pleasures only for one day of my early years. I used to think I was in the shadows then; but I was at least innocent and free from guile. You remember, Andrew,” she went on, “how I was proud

and pleased to go forth under my Lady Sanderson's care. I think if ever any eyes were bewitched mine were. A false glamour was around me. Tom Browne—noble, true, and tender of heart—loved me too well."

Andrew winced at these words, but drew himself erect, as if to brace himself to listen.

"He loved me too well, and I loved him ; but I loved myself better. Did you dream, Andrew, I could be so vain and selfish a creature? But it is true. If Tom could have set me up at once in all the fine things I cared about I should have held firm to him : and oh, the summer days he passed here with me were the happiest of all my life—and I have not had many happy days, Andrew. There is no need to go over all this Court life. You know that when Tom came to claim me as a right, I put him off, and sent him away in sorrow and anger. I thought he might repent himself, and return ; but no, he never returned. Now comes the worst part—a part I dare scarce tell you. Many gallants fluttered round me ; I felt like one who needed support and help. They made much of my beauty, as they called it, and at first it was sweet and pleasant, and then it was all like gall and bitterness to me. I was frightened at the light way in which men began to

flatter me in coarse language that makes me shudder as I recall it. Then one came who vowed eternal love; he belonged to a noble house, but he is a Papist."

Andrew groaned as the last words left Amphyllis's lips, and he put his hand upon the back of a chair, as if to steady himself under a heavy blow.

"Yes, and I listened to his protestations and believed him. He took me to a chapel, and we were married."

"Married!" Andrew exclaimed. "Oh, most unhappy, most miserable girl!"

"Yes, but I doubt now if the marriage were a true one. Now it is this I come to you to find out. I dare not ask the Doctor to do so, for he is coldly angry against me. Moll—dear Moll—is kind; but they all look on me as the destroyer of their son and brother. So it is to you I turn, Andrew. I pray you go to the Duke of York and find from him what is the real condition of things regarding me—am I a wife, or no true wife?"

"Nay," said Andrew sternly; "I could not myself repair to such places to hear the truth regarding the person of whom you speak; but I will set on foot due inquiry."

"The poor Queen! the poor Queen!" Amphyllis

exclaimed ; " she knows of all this, but I am only one in a big crowd at Court. I shall pass away and be forgotten : no one really loves me ; no one will ever weep over my ruin."

The deep pathos of Amphyllis's voice made Andrew hide his face to conceal the emotion he could not repress.

A short hard sob, such as is wrung from a man in the sorest grief, made Amphyllis rise and put her hand on his.

" Andrew, I have been wilful and foolish ; I have caused you trouble many a time ; forgive me, Andrew, and help me."

Instead of any direct reply, Andrew laid his hand on Amphyllis's head, bowed low before him, and prayed aloud for her whom he loved better than himself.

Then he said :

" I will make all due inquiry, Amphyllis ; but you must set down in writing the precise facts of your— of your supposed marriage ; nothing must be hid. Does he, does this man, who is an emissary of Satan, a very limb of the Evil One, hold communication with you ?"

" Scarce any for a year past, save when he wants money. The love he professed for me soon vanished, as I might have known it would."

Andrew sighed out :

“ Poor, poor lost lamb ! May the Good Shepherd in mercy seek and save the lost ! ”

Then he put the ink-horn and quill before Amphyllis, and some thick paper, such as he used to write his “ Thoughts for the Elect of God,” which he afterwards converted into sermons.

“ I will leave you alone with God while you indite here the truth, the whole truth, Amphyllis, and I will go and prepare Bridget for your presence, and then I will see you no more till I can give some report of my inquiries.”

Andrew closed the door and locked it on the other side, and left Amphyllis alone.

Alone with God ! before whom she poured forth the anguish of her soul, and taking from her deep pocket the packet and the knot of red ribbon, she laid them before her on the table.

She had not dared to open the packet before, and now, as fold after fold of the thick coverings were removed, she almost dreaded the first sight of the sapphire ring. Well did she remember how she had given it back to Tom, and his words : “ I will keep it till death, or till you recall me.”

Death had come, and now the sapphire brought its message of undying love ; for it shone like a blue

star in the light of the oil lamp. It was a ray from heaven in the darkness of poor Amphyllis's soul. "Doe the next thyng." Yes, she would do the next thing, and keep back nothing of the truth. She would write it all clear and straight for Andrew. She could not weep ; no tears come to relieve a pain at the heart like hers—they would come, but not yet, not yet !

There are many women who have thrown away the most precious thing in life—the love of a noble man—and have rued it to their latest day. There are many women who have been, like Amphyllis, blinded by the glare of the world, and have been, as it were, poisoned by the cup of flattery held to their lips. There are many, who, alas ! cry out in the bitterness of their soul, that they are but reaping the harvest of their own wrong-doings ; that having sown the wind, it is meet that they should reap the whirlwind.

And if any such should read this story of Amphyllis Windham they will pity her as none else can pity her, for the ninety and nine sheep that go not astray can hardly sound the depths of woe through which this poor wanderer must pass ere the Shepherd finds her.

Amphyllis pressed the knot of faded ribbon to

her lips, and put it within her bodice. Then she placed the ring on her finger, and as she did so, a little crumpled bit of parchment, tied to it by a thread of red silk, caught her eye. She unfolded it, and with difficulty read :

“Dear heart, I send this ring back to you, that you gave me that sad day, in token of my undying love.”

“Oh ! Tom, Tom,” she exclaimed, “why, why, have you left me ? But, ah ! it was I who left you ; I who knew nought of real happiness after I sent you from me. Ah ! dear heart, sweet heart, forgive me ;” and as if in answer to her words, the sapphire suddenly sent a flash from her finger of pure ethereal light, as she took the quill in her slender hand, and prepared to write the necessary information for Andrew Whitelock.

And where was Andrew ? He was like her as he said, “Alone with God ;” he had retired to his little meeting-house and prayed for her in the most earnest and pathetic pleading. Through all his sorrow I think there was a latent sense of gratitude that she had come home to him. Had she not said, “Andrew, I am come home” ?

There was in his heart the same abiding love which nothing could shake, though the horror he

felt that she had gone through the form of marriage with a Roman Catholic, in his eyes, as he said, "a very limb of Satan," who bore on his forehead the mark of the beast, we can hardly realise in these days.

The Puritan zeal in which Andrew was covered as with a cloak, made it impossible for him to see anything but evil in one who lay in the darkness of Popish blindness. Of all the sore thrusts which his love for Amphyllis had caused him, the knowledge that she had secretly married a Roman Catholic, was the sorest.

Bridget wondered much at the long silence in the parlour, and when an hour had gone by, tapped at the door.

"Andrew," she said, "the supper is served. Will you not sit down with us, Andrew?"

But there was no answer. Then Bridget tried the handle, but found the door fastened.

The large key was in the lock, and she ventured to turn it. Andrew never liked to be disturbed, she knew, but if the door was locked on the outside it was clear that Andrew was not within.

Greatly wondering, Bridget went softly into the room, and there, exhausted with all she had gone through, on the old settle by the fireplace, where no fire was burning, cold and weary, lay the prostrate

form of Amphyllis Windham. Bridget stooped over her, and exclaimed :

“Amphyllis ! Amphyllis ! my poor Amphyllis !”

The voice partially roused her, and she said, dreamily :

“I have written it all, Andrew—all the truth. Forgive, forgive !”

Bridget raised the poor gold-crowned head on her shoulder as she knelt down by her, and murmured over her loving words. Soon Andrew came in and Joan.

“Make her room ready for her,” Andrew said ; “for she is come home at last.”

And Joan, with hands raised in wonder, retired unquestioning to fulfil Andrew’s wishes.

Before the old clock had struck twelve that night Amphyllis was lying in her own old room with its lattice window, against which the bare boughs of the honeysuckle tapped ; and while Bridget watched by her side, forgot her sorrow for the time in a calm, untroubled slumber.

The inquiries made about Christopher Talbot had confirmed Andrew’s worst fears. He had acted a traitor’s part, and even before Edward Browne could confront him and charge him with his treachery, he had married the rich mercer’s daughter, and had departed out of the country with her.

The whole marriage had been a mere subterfuge to compass unworthy ends, and every representation Christopher Talbot had made to the Queen and to her unhappy maid in waiting was utterly false. At first the affair made a little excitement in the Court, for the King swore the most beautiful creature should be recalled, and that he himself would choose a partner for her, and give her her proper rank. The Queen, who drowned her own injuries in the perpetually flowing stream of pleasure and gaiety, wept a little for Amphyllis, and vowed she had believed in the good faith of the priest Father Pedro and the devotion of Christopher Talbot. The ladies about the Court pitied Amphyllis a little and blamed her much, and many who had been jealous of her, had now a sense of exultation in her fall. Her rooms at Whitehall were cleared of all her personal possessions, which were at Dr. Edward Browne's request handed over in her name to Margery Price, and the money she had received from various sources, at loo, and as her salary for service, was also by her wish sent to Andrew Whitelock by Edward Browne's hand. When Andrew communicated to her the result of the inquiries, she seemed like one in a dream, and for several weeks she lay quiet in her bed, not speaking

much, nor taking notice of anything around her, though gentle, and patient, and uncomplaining ; but begging Bridget to let her stay in her own chamber. One winter's evening when she had crept down to the sitting-room during Andrew's absence on one of his missions, she asked Bridget if any of the Doctor's family had sent to inquire how she did.

"Nay," Bridget said, "save once, when Sir Thomas himself called and looked on you in the heavy slumber in which you were wrapt. He said nature would do its work, and that you wanted no physic. But he added : ' I charge you, if she shows further signs of sickness of body, to summon me. I cannot cure sickness of soul ; that lies beyond me.' "

"And that was all?" Amphyllis asked.

"Aye, every word."

Amphyllis was silent for a time, and then she said :

"Bridget ! I would fain wear a homespun gown, a white kerchief crossed on my breast, and a plain cap. Will you buy them for me with a part of the money which belongs to Andrew ? Then I will take my part here and go with you in your visits to the sick and poor, and try to do what in me lies to atone for the past. I will never wear gaud

or finery again, but this one jewel must I keep till I die." And she pressed to her lips the sapphire ring, which flashed out its message as she raised her hand to her lips and kissed it fervently.

Bridget did as she was requested, and a few days later Andrew, returning from a prolonged absence, saw sitting by the fire with the spinning-wheel before her, a figure which realised his old dream. And Amphyllis in her plain dress and cap, looked in his eyes, infinitely more beautiful than in the gay garments in which she had once so delighted.

Andrew had not seen his cousin since the day when he had told her of the result of his inquiries. She had then been lying in bed passive before him and had made but little response to his communication. Nor had he the heart to say a word of reproach ; scarcely could he find voice to lift up in prayer for her, as was his custom whenever they were together.

Even now it was she who first spoke : " Andrew, I wish to give up all the folly of the world, and these plain garments are a sign of that wish. I am ready for any work for which you may desire to call me."

Andrew restrained his longing to clasp his cousin to his heart, and answered in his natural voice :

“It seemeth to me, Amphyllis, that the Lord hath called you to work, where the path is unknown.”

Her eyes lighted with all her old eagerness, as she said :

“Whither, Andrew—oh ! tell me.”

“John Falconer and I have for some weeks past had under consideration the reasonableness of my joining him in the Far West, in the settlement he has called Falcon’s Nest. Bridget may cling to the old roof tree here, but I fancy she will follow at last gladly. The cottage may be sold to advantage, and with due preparation made, we may sail hence in the new year. I had not dared to think you would accompany us, but this evening I seem to feel that the Spirit of God hath moved in your soul, and that He has answered my prayer. Will you accompany us to Falcon’s Nest? Say, Amphyllis, yea, or nay.”

“Yes, Andrew,” she answered, “I will come,” but the colour rushed to her pale face, as she said :

“With Bridget, to be your sister and friend, to brighten your life somewhat, when the cloud that shadows me has past.”

Andrew bowed his head, whatever he felt it was not for him to express it now.

“As our sister and friend”—he repeated her own

words,—“so be it ; and may the Lord prosper you, and make you a blessing.”

The annual festivities at the Duke's Palace were carried on at the Christmas-tide of that year, with even greater magnificence than before. The chariots, filled with gorgeously dressed ladies, were continually taking up and putting down their gay freight. The bells rang lustily, the guns fired salutes, and praise of the princely hospitality of the Howards was on every one's lips. On the last night of the old year, a slight figure dressed in a long grey cloak, stopped before the door of Sir Thomas Browne's mansion.

Old Jonas, who opened it, said before Amphyllis could speak :

“The Doctor is gone to Heigham, to the Bishop Hall ; you'd better seek for another leech, young woman.”

Then Amphyllis turned her head and said : “Jonas, I want to see Mistress Mary ; will you let me have access to her ?”

Jonas stared at Amphyllis, and gave vent to a strong adjuration :

“You wrought mischief enow here with your fair face,” he said, “you'd best take yourself off.”

“Nay, dear Jonas,” said Amphyllis, “do not refuse me. I am going over the seas to-morrow, never,

never to return. I pray you let me see Mistress Mary, sweet Moll as we were wont to call her," she added.

Jonas found resistance impossible ; he beckoned with his finger, and led Amphyllis to a door which opened upon a back staircase. He stumbled up the steep stone stairs before Amphyllis, and they came out at last upon one of the wide corridors on the third story.

Jonas knocked at a door on the right, and opening it, as a gentle "Enter," was heard, ushered Amphyllis into Mary's presence, without a word. When the door had closed behind her, Amphyllis paused.

Mary was lying on a couch drawn near a blazing fire. A table at her side was covered with gifts which Arthur Dee, and her father and mother and sisters had brought her as New Year's gifts. Mary was paler and more ethereal looking than ever, and wrapped in a long robe of white, edged with fur, the only spot of colour about her was the crimson flush on either cheek. She gazed questioningly at her visitor for some moments, and then holding out her arms, said :

"Amphyllis, dear Amphyllis, I was thinking of you and the old years, and now——"

"Oh ! Moll, sweet Moll !" Amphyllis sobbed, as

she threw herself on her knees by the couch, and Mary's arms were twined round her neck.

"Oh, Moll, sweet Moll, I am come but to say farewell for ever."

"I have heard a rumour of your intention," Mary said, when both were calmer. "Good John Falconer has often been with us telling over every detail of our dear Tom's last days. He told us of Andrew Whitelock's selling all his effects and seeking a home in the new world, and that you were to accompany them. My father said he must see you ere you went, but my mother and my sisters and Nan's husband are somewhat hard against you. You will forgive them, dear Amphyllis."

"Nay," said Amphyllis, "it is they who must forgive me. Oh! Moll, if only the past could come again!"

"That is vain longing," Mary said, with all her old earnestness, "vain longing; as I lie here between two worlds—for I get weaker, and know full well my days on earth must be few—I think much on the greatness of God, and the littleness of man. Verily, man at his best estate is altogether vanity. We walk in a vain show, and disquiet ourselves in vain. But, Amphyllis, as a father, He pities us."

"Do you think He pities *me*, Moll?—me, whose

folly and love of show wrought such trouble? Ah! Moll, I would fain change places with you—you, who are good, and pure, and true to your own love.”

“You know not what you say, dear heart,” Moll said. “Only to-day I have prayed Arthur Dee to let me be only as a sister to him, and set him free to wed a strong bright maiden, but he will not hear of it. Saith he, ‘I am *his*, and he is mine, and that sufficeth.’”

“Oh! what a fair picture,” Amphyllis exclaimed; “what a Paradise you depict, into which my worthless feet can never enter. Alas! for me.”

Then Mary comforted and kissed her friend, who was like a sister and dearer than any sister to her, and they spoke of the future, and of the grave under the great pine trees where Tom lay at rest. And Moll entrusted to Amphyllis’s care a dried flower, one she had plucked when a child, while walking with Tom on Mousehold Heath, and preserved as a precious relic.

She kissed the poor yellow leaves again and again, and said—

“Take it with Moll’s love, and lay it on the turf which is green over his grave.”

After an hour’s sweet converse, Amphyllis rose to say the last good-bye.

As she was leaving the chamber, the Doctor entered it. Mary from her couch watched anxiously what her father would do or say.

He stood for a moment transfixed with the change in the bright-haired Amphyllis. It was she who spoke first.

"Sir Thomas Browne, may it please you to give me your blessing ere I depart for a distant land, to return no more. Your blessing, sir, and your forgiveness."

Tears choked the Doctor's utterance as he replied :

"May the Lord lift up the light of His countenance on you, dear child, and give you peace."

Then before either he or Mary were aware of it, Amphyllis had drawn her hood closer over her head and glided from the room.

Old Jonas, in the hall, saw her as she passed out into the night, and said :

"She was like an angel when she came in here years agoe bright and gay. Well, well ! as we sow so we must reap ; and she is not the first of woman-kind who has brought trouble on other folk and on herself also. God forgive them. Still I say may the Lord bless her !"

And so Amphyllis Windham passed out of Sir Thomas Browne's house for the last time.

PART III.

1682.

SOME wear away in calmes, some are carried away in storms ; we come into the world one way, there are many gates to go out of it. God give us grace to fit and prepare ourselves for that necessity, and to be ready to leave all when and howsoever He shall call.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE, 1681.



SIGNS AND TOKENS. .

1682.

ELEVEN years had passed away. Sir Thomas Browne was seated in his library one August evening, with his writing materials before him. He had just written a letter to his son, Dr. Edward Browne, now a distinguished physician in London, who counted amongst his patients people no less famous than the Duke of Richmond, the Earl of Aylesbury, and many noblemen about the Court. Sir Thomas Browne was leaning back in his chair lost in thought, when he felt his sleeve pulled, and, looking down, saw a quaint little figure standing by him.

"I have finished limning the horse's head, grandfather; I'm sick of my pen; tell me a story, a very pretty one."

"Well-a-day, little Tommy; I had forgot your presence."

"I thought so," said the child. "You sighed so often; and your lips moved."

"Aye, little Jackanapes, you have a pair of sharp

eyes, as I tell your father, and a sharp tongue to boot. You were in trouble at dinner for catching hold of the cider-cup greedily, to drink what Aunt Frances had left."

"I don't like Aunt Frances," said Tommy, climbing on his grandfather's knee. "I wish Aunt Moll were alive."

"Ah! sweet Moll," sighed the Doctor, "there are few to match her."

"Has she been dead a great many, many years?" Tommy asked.

"Near upon six," was the answer. "We call her dead, child, but she lives, and so do all my vanished children—little Prue, and Bob, and Doll"—and here the Doctor's voice changed, and there was infinite tenderness in its accents, as he added:

"And Tom—honest Tom."

"You never call me Tom," the child said; "always Tommy. Old Jonas says I ain't worthy to have his name. But Jonas is eighty, and mumbles and mows nonsense. I'd like to be called Tom."

"Nay, stick to Tommy, it suits you better, a little mischief-loving sprite."

"Tell me about the other Tom. I heard Jonas say he died of a broken heart."

"Nay, nay, not so; my brave, good son died a

hero's death, though not on the battlefield ; and he sleeps under the big pine trees in the Far West of America."

"Jonas says," lisped the boy, "that a lady, fair as an angel——"

"Nay now, little Tommy, quote not old Jonas ; but tell me if you would have some money for fairings?"

Tommy's eyes sparkled, and he clapped his hands vigorously. The Doctor saw his ruse was successful, and counting out several coins into the child's hand, he bid him run and tell Abigail that he was to go to the fair the next morning, and buy as many ginger-breads as he liked.

Sir Thomas Browne certainly spoiled Tommy, the eldest son of his son Edward, whom he had taken to his house and to his heart, to the great contentment of his father and mother, for babies were annual gifts in the house in Salisbury Court, Fleet Street, and Master Tommy was of a somewhat turbulent nature.

His Aunt Frances put some restraint on him, but his grandparents were far more indulgent to him, than they had ever been to their own children.

Age, and many losses had softened Dame Dorothy Browne, and, though still very active for her years, she had resigned most of her domestic duties to her

one unmarried daughter, Frances, and since Mary's death neither she nor Sir Thomas had cared to have frequent entertainments, nor to visit much in the city and neighbourhood.

Tommy had scarcely left his grandfather when, to his great surprise and evident joy, Dr. Edward Browne came into the room with his mother.

"Why, Ned, this is joy!" exclaimed the Doctor; "but I trust no ill news brings you hither?"

"Nay, no ill news," said Dame Dorothy, "no ill news, or our faces would show it—eh, Ned?"

"I found a leisure time, and felt drawn hither; the two days' coach is slow enow, but I slept at Cambridge, and have taken counsel there regarding my translation of 'Themistocles' and 'Plutarch's Lives.'"

"Well said! well done!" said Sir Thomas, who took intense pride in his son's literary achievements, far greater than he ever took in his own. "And have you had a hitch in any phrase, good Edward?"

"Nay now, dear husband, prythee leave 'Themistocles' till you and Ned burn the midnight oil, and let me hear of my daughter Browne, and little Sue, and the dear infant."

"They are all in brave health, thank God," was the

answer. "And how fares it with my little scapegrace Tommy?"

"Well enow. He keeps us alive here; for this large mansion is empty now, where once it was full, and the memory of the dead haunts it; but let me be thankful for those who are left to me," Sir Thomas said, rousing himself from a passing sadness. "I live again in you, my son. You attain to far higher distinction than your father ever hath done."

"Nay, I will not hear it. Only the other day I was reminded how much I owe to the celebrity of my father's name."

Sir Thomas's rare sweet smile broke over his face as he said:

"We will not bandy compliments, dear son. Let us to domestic details, for which thy mother hungers, and give us news of our daughter Fairfax and her child."

"Gladly will I; and my father and I will postpone our other talk to the time of the 'midnight oil,' as my mother has it."

Supper was served, as in days past, in the wide dining hall, and Arthur Dee had been summoned to meet Edward. Arthur Dee, who was still faithfully mourning for Mary, was on the Doctor's right hand, and little Tommy, in great glee, occupied a

place on his right, casting defiant and triumphant looks at his Aunt Frances, who strongly disapproved of his sitting up to so late a meal.

Supper was not over when a loud ringing at the bell made Dame Dorothy exclaim :

"Jonas and Sam know you leave not the house after supper, dear husband."

"If it be any serious call I will attend to it for you," said Arthur Dee ; "for we could not allow the physician from London to go down into the city at this hour."

"Doctors must go at all hours," said Edward Browne, "whether the city be London or Norwich ;" but nothing came of the ring, after all.

"After all, it is but a letter," Frances said, turning her head towards a servant, who was bearing a thick missive on a silver tray to her father.

"A letter—haste, post-haste—by the mail."

"Nay, your honour, it was brought by private hand from America."

"A long journey, forsooth. Well, I will read it at leisure when Ned and I are alone."

Thus the letter was left to lie unheeded except by Master Tommy, who, while his elders were engaged with much conversation, took the opportunity of untying the cord, which was sealed, and taking out of

it some dried grass and flowers. Some he scattered on the floor, some he pushed back under the cover, and at last, discovered by his Aunt Frances, he was summarily dismissed from the table and sent to bed, raising his voice in angry expostulation, and using his legs and arms with vigour upon the person of Sam, who, at his young mistress's order, conveyed Tommy from the room. Nor did his grandfather as usual plead for him.

"Nay, nay, young rascals must be taught that to open a letter is felony. You agree with me, son Edward?"

"Indeed I do," was the reply. "That young son of mine needs the rod, methinks."

Meantime Arthur Dee had picked up the dried flowers, and had laid them by Sir Thomas's side, who had unfolded the thick sheets which Tommy had so ruthlessly torn open, and read the heading.

"From Falcon's Nest,

"N. America, Aug. 1682.

"To the physician Thomas Browne,

"Andrew Whitelock sendeth a greeting."

"That Puritan fellow at last," exclaimed the Doctor. "Well, what he has to say will not set the Wensum on fire. Art thou curious to hear what it is, sweet heart?"

Dame Dorothy shook her head.

"It is a long time since we heard of those people ; not since our sweet Moll died."

"No," and Sir Thomas sighed. "I see she is anxious to hear what the fellow saith. Was ever a woman who could resist the temptation of a bit of news? Now do not take it amiss, dear heart," he continued. "Here, Arthur Dee or Ned, satisfy her curiosity, and read aloud. I can have no secrets from you."

Arthur Dee took the closely-written sheets in his hand, and said :

"It will take some time to decipher, sir."

"Then let us betake ourselves to mother's parlour ; there is more warmth and easier seats there ; for, methinks, that letter will be a long affair to get through," said Frances.

Dame Dorothy led the way to her parlour, where, to her dismay, the incorrigible "Tommy" had coiled himself up on a settle, thus defying the powers that be.

"Let him rest, let him rest," his too-indulgent grandmother said ; but Sir Thomas Browne, going up to the boy, raised him in his arms and said gravely :

"Dost thou not know, Tommy, that disobedience is a sin against God, and to open a letter, the property

of another, is a deed to be punished? Say, Tommy, would you grow up a brave hero like your uncle, or a poor despicable idler like some young gallants who serve neither God nor man?"

"I would be like 'honest Tom,'" said the child, burying his head in his grandfather's shoulder.

"Yes, and like thy father; so I will take you back whence you came, and you will be quiet like a good son."

"You must not carry that heavy boy to his room, father," said Edward quickly. "It is too great a weight——"

"For seventy-six years' age, Edward. You are right; so take the urchin yourself. He hath wound himself round his old grandfather's heart, and has gladdened a stripped home with his childish glee."

Arthur Dee was all the time scanning the closely-written sheet he held in his hand, and when Dr. Edward Browne returned, he said, "There is a lengthened preamble, and the contents are somewhat melancholy."

"Read on," Sir Thomas exclaimed, "read on. We know the style of these Puritans well enow, and that they are long-winded. Read on."

Arthur Dee thus admonished, began to read in a

clear voice, though slowly, for the writing was not very easy to decipher.

"I indite this letter at the request of one dear to me—Amphyllis Windham."

"Aye—what—not his wife, then?" exclaimed Dame Dorothy.

"Hush, hush, dear heart!" said the Doctor, "nor break the thread of the narrative."

"At the request of one dear to me, Amphyllis Windham. She has been ailing for many months. The rigour of the winter has, year by year, been more and more harmful to her; and methinks ere another spring bursts over the trees, she will be in the land of everlasting spring. As you know, good Sir Thomas Browne, the bonds which tie her to you and yours are strong——"

"They did not seem so," exclaimed Dame Dorothy. "Strong, indeed!"

Then Sir Thomas Browne crossed over to the settle where his wife sat, and seated himself beside her. "Nay, dear heart, do not interrupt thus."

Arthur Dee then began again:

"The news of your daughter Mary's death affected her deeply; and methinks the decline, for a long space, hath been visible to all eyes but mine. I would not hide from you the truth that she—

Amphyllis—is dearer to me than aught else the world ever gave ; but I have refrained from pressing her into marriage, for she hath told me, again and again, that were impossible. Thus for many a year I have loved her, next to God ; and she and I, and my sister Bridget have lived a life of harmony and peace. I heard the Lord's voice saying to me, 'The path of daily sacrifice is appointed by Me. Walk therein, nor ask *why*.' For, verily, Sir Thomas, love is best shown by sacrifice, as our Great Exemplar has abundantly set before us. Our manner of life has been simple and peaceful. I have carried the banner of the Lord amongst the dark-skinned Indian tribes which skirt our borders. They have been friendly, for the most part ; and seeing that I am fearless, they have never betrayed my trust. Falcon's Nest is now a large collection of houses built, indeed, of the wood of the forest, but fair to look upon—swathed in summer with divers creeping plants and ablaze with blossoms, and fair to look on in winter, adorned with snowflakes. It has been given to me to minister in the House separated for the Lord, and around it there are many graves, shaded by lofty cypresses and pines, which chant over the sleepers the sweetest melody, as the wind plays through the branches. First and fore-

most in all good work, while strength was spared her, was Amphyllis. The children followed her as she passed along, and clung to her garment; the sick wearied for the sound of her voice; the old leaned on her; all blessed her. Since her weakness increased she has not been able to move about; but she has been lying this summer in the verandah, surrounded by flowers, and here many have gathered to hear her words, and to gaze on what is like to the vision of an angel. Two or three nights ago, she called my sister, and told her that, between sleeping and waking, she had seen her early love, the friend of John Falconer, your son. He had seemed to point with his hand to the East, where the sun was painting the heavens with rose and gold, and she *felt* rather than heard him say that she was to send some token ere it was too late to those he had loved on earth. She took this for a sign; and at her request I indite this letter, whereby she prays you to know that her true love flows forth to the father and mother of her early love. She saith, to use her own words, 'Let them know that my heart turns ever to the memory of their goodness; that the days passed under their roof were my brightest days. I would fain have said my *best*, but that is not so. The best were to come after clouds of sin and

sorrow, even as the storm-cloud shows in its track, as it departs, the bow of many colours.' She bade me enclose in this packet, sent by a kinsman of John Falconer to England, some bits of grass and flowers plucked from the turf which covers Tom Browne's grave. There she hopes to lie herself till the morning of the resurrection dawns, and the dead in Christ rise first.

"Sir Thomas Browne, it has been verily a heavy task to write this letter. I pray you to make to my beloved one some sign of love and forgiveness, if perchance you deem that it is due. How dare I try to sound with my poor plumb-line the depth of that love which rules us. There is mercy with Him that He may be feared, but He is just also, and will in nowise spare the guilty.

"He has seen fit to deny me the earthly gift I craved, and I will not doubt His wisdom. As a brother I have served her, and kept back all other signs of a deeper and tenderer love, lest haply, I should wound that heart already pierced by many a shaft.

"But think you, Sir Thomas Browne, this has been an easy matter? Nay, verily, there have been moments when I have cried out for help, like a seaman in danger of being overwhelmed at last in the billows against which he has battled long and bravely.

“And now I commend you, Sir Thomas Browne, and yours, to God’s holy keeping ; praying you to lose no time in replying to this letter, or she who longs to receive your answer, may be beyond its reach, in the other land, whither—and with a breaking heart I say it—I see she is hastening.

“Your servant, with respect and duty,

“ANDREW WHITELOCK.”

When Arthur Dee ceased reading, no one spoke for some moments. At last Sir Thomas Browne, said :

“Let no one lightly despise any man who can be faithful to a woman as Andrew Whitelock has been faithful to Amphyllis Windham. Sweet heart, you and I have been the proud parents of noble sons. One who left us in the flower of his youth, was crowned with a hero’s crown. But methinks there is a laurel-wreath due also to a man like Andrew Whitelock, who has held unfalteringly through long years to a woman who could not return his love of the closer kind which binds man to wife ; but who was dependent on him, nevertheless, for home and shelter. I say Andrew Whitelock is deserving of thanks and praise from *us* for thus unselfishly guarding

her who was to the latest moment the one love of our brave boy's devotion."

Tears sprang to Dame Dorothy's eyes, and ran down her cheeks, as putting her hand into her husband's, she said :

" Dear husband, be pitiful to a mother who traces the loss of her noble son to the hand of this fair woman, who nevertheless seemeth to win all hearts. But I will forgive her, and thus imitate you. In the packet which you despatch, I will enclose a few words which shall testify my forgiveness."

" Well said, sweet heart ; well said," was Sir Thomas Browne's answer, as he drew his wife nearer to him, and kissed her with that holiest of all kisses, the kiss of the husband who has been faithful from youth to old age, to the wife of his bosom. Thrice happy are the wives who can receive such a kiss, with a true heart thankfully, and with no shadow of self-reproach for failure in duty. Thrice happy the husband who bestows it, as a sign of the undying allegiance of a loving heart.

Some bright days followed. Dr. Edward Browne was, on his return to London, appointed by the King's express recommendation, physician to Bartholomew's Hospital ; and great was the rejoicing in the Norwich mansion when the tidings of this new distinction reached it.

September was a golden month, and Sir Thomas received many letters of congratulation from those who were proud to see the mantle of the father descending on the son.

"See here, Frances," Sir Thomas said, one evening in October, "see here. Edward has wrote to me, as if he were still a boy, to furnish him with prescriptions, and asking advice. But, Frances, it is ever so: the truly great are small in their own eyes. It is joy to thy old father to receive a letter ending as this doth. Nay," he said, scanning the close-written pages, "I will not attempt to read about a strong 'diacodium,' but hearken to what he saith under.

"'Pray, sir, write me word how you make your syrupus de scordio, for it is not known in London.'

"To think of that, Frances! not known in London! Well, it has been known in Norwich since you were an infant; and then he adds—

"'Pray, sir, thinke of some good effectual chepe medicines for the hospital; it will be a piece of charity, which will be beneficial to the poore, hundreds of years after we are all dead and gone.'

"Nay, good son Edward, nay; I will not go so far as that: new times may bring new remedies. We shall scarce live in men's minds by our 'syrupus

scordio.' There will be another syrypus ere fifty years have come and gone, I'll warrant."

Frances, who was seated on the arm of her father's deep oak chair, laughed, saying :

"I would fain there were no physicks, father ; anyway, if I have again to pour a draught down Tommy's throat. The gurgling, and the choking, and kicking this morning when I gave the potion you bid me was enough to make me say, 'Throw physic to the dogs.'"

Sir Thomas laughed merrily.

"Poor little Tommy ! I must see the next potion is sweetened. You were not too rough with the child, Frances ?"

"Rough, nay, but he must do as he is bid ; Edward left me that charge, and I will fulfil it, I warrant."

Frances Browne presented a marked contrast to the gentle and spiritual Moll, who had, as we know, been the light of her father's eyes. But she was practical and clever, and of the greatest use to her father as an accomplished draughtswoman, and in copying for him his prescriptions, and writing letters in her clear hand.

Sir Thomas Browne's attachment to his children grew and strengthened with time, and in this I think he was an exception to many fathers, who fondle and

indulge their boys and girls, in infancy and childhood and early youth, and when they become men and women, leave them to their own devices, and take but scant interest in their pursuits. Dr. Edward Browne's letter is a proof of this ; and Frances read over her father's shoulder the last paragraph :

" St. Thomas's Hospital is larger than ours, and holds forty or fifty persons more ; we have divers of the King's soldiers in the hospital. My wife sent down the last weeke a pasteboard box by the waggon, with candlesticks for Mrs. Pooley and chocolate for my lady Pettus.

" My duty to my most dear mother, and love to my sister and Tommy,

" Your most obedient sonne,

" EDWARD BROWNE."*

" Has the box duly arrived ? " Sir Thomas asked. " See the chocolate goes to my lady Pettus, for she is ever on the watch for failure in sending to her what my daughter Browne purchases in London. For my own part, methinks Norwich is not so behindhand as it is the fashion to declare ; but there is a smack of

* Dr. Edward Browne married Henrietta Susan, daughter of Dr. Christopher Terne, a physician of eminence, who lived in Lime Street. The contents of this letter is taken from Sir Thomas Browne's domestic correspondence, dated October 3, 1682.

gentility in saying, 'This came from London,' and, better still, 'This was imported from Paris.' Ever the same Hydra, with many heads—you know its name, Frances—*Fashion*, and that of its first cousin, *Pretence*."

"I know that you affect neither, dear father," said Frances, kissing him; "and now I must away to help mother to unpick a cobble-stitch one of the maids has set in her embroidery."

The week that followed was one of chill autumnal weather, and withered leaves falling through a drizzling rain. The good Doctor was called out late on the evening of the fifteenth of October, and on his return, as he passed Jonas in the hall, the old man remarked that he shuddered, and said to Sam, who was now the acting porter:

"See to it that the hall fire burns better; it is so bitter cold this night: and run down to Dr. Arthur Dee, and say I would wish him to visit for me the names set down on this paper."

Then Sir Thomas joined the family at the usual supper, and Frances noticed he ate but little. He retired to his library, not inviting Frances or her mother to come with him, as he often did; but Dame Dorothy, feeling anxious—she could scarce tell why—entered the library gently about nine o'clock.

Sir Thomas was seated in his accustomed place—the table at his right hand, covered with papers—and Dame Dorothy saw a letter had been begun to their eldest son, but was unfinished.

“Dear husband,” she said, leaning over him, “is aught amiss?”

“Nay, not that I know of, sweet heart. I came in with a shuddering fit, but a draught has warmed me—a little over-warmed me;” and he placed his hand on his wife’s.

“It is burning like coal,” she exclaimed; “you must summon Arthur Dee.”

“Not now, not now; seat thyself beside me, dear wife, and let us be quiet, or talk, as the mood takes us. There, lean back in that chair, and let us be as lovers again.”

“We have ever been lovers, dear husband; no need to say *again*.”

“Nay, that is true,” he said. “I have been dozing, half conscious, half asleep. I seemed to see all the vanished little ones—Bob, with his satchel, coming in from the grammar-school; Doll and Prue, the babes, that went home so soon, tired of the cold world; and our gentle Moll, sweet Moll, and Tom. With him appeared another figure, that of the poor child, Amphyllis. I have written to her, dear wife; let thy

words accompany it. I have told her what Edward has lately heard of that wretched man, who beguiled her, bewitched her is the right word. He lies in a dishonoured grave in Spain, struck down in a brawl by a stiletto. He had robbed his lawful wife of her all, and then left her ; and so ends the history of Christopher Talbot."

Lady Browne drew herself up and said :

"I had forgot his existence ; and it was for such as he, that she, Amphyllis, threw the love of our noble son to the wind."

"Nay, now, Dorothy, nay ; it was not so. The world had taken a grip on the child, and she was bewildered with the worship of her beauty on all sides. This handsome man, scion of a noble house, had an easy prey, shame on him."

"And on *her*," said Dame Dorothy in a low tone.

Her husband did not reply, and in a few minutes she saw he had fallen into a broken slumber again.

Dame Dorothy watched him anxiously, but did not move as she held his hand in hers.

Presently he murmured that Moll wanted him, sweet Moll ; and then awaking with a start, as if to go to her, he complained of the severe pain which never afterwards left him.

His brethren in the profession came from far and

near, but no remedies availed. Arthur Dee never left his side, and Dr. Edward Browne returned from London to do all that his skill could suggest.

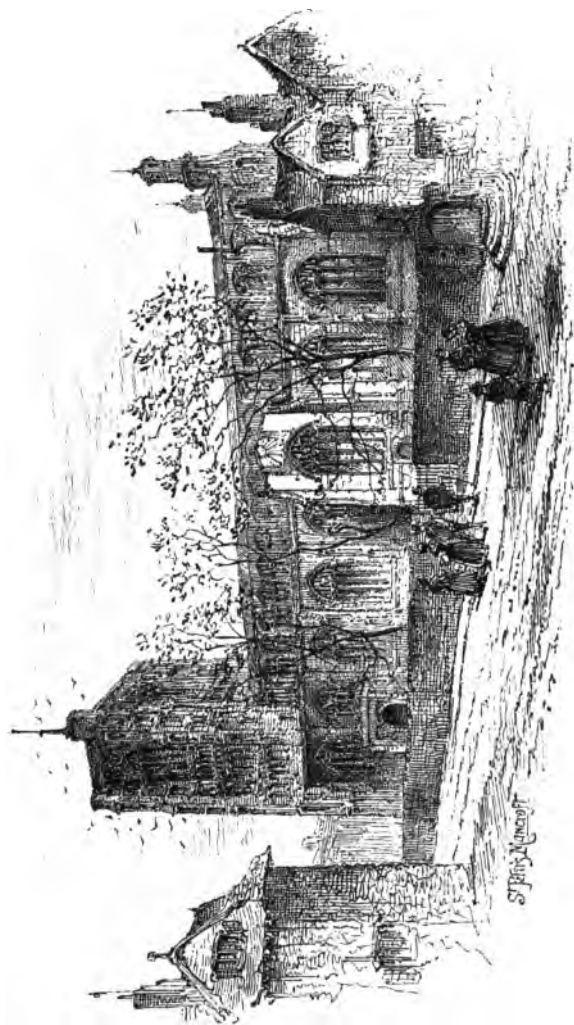
Calm and self-possessed, he who had often been so successful in subduing the pain of others, and recalling them, as it were, from the very gates of the grave, now submitted to what was sometimes agony, with quiet submission to the will of God, in whom he expressed his trust, and whose love in Christ had taken away the fear of death.

The mansion was besieged with inquiries; letters and messages from all parts arrived post-haste, to gain tidings of his condition. The poor collected in groups along the Haymarket watching for news, and all hearts were heavy with grief.

Sir Thomas Browne's natural strength had decayed so little, and his noble face had shown so few signs of age, that the people amongst whom he had lived and laboured found it hard to realise that he had seen seventy-seven years, and that his life had exceeded the natural term allotted to man upon the earth.

It was on the 19th of October, his seventy-seventh birthday, that the bells of St. Peter Mancroft tolled in solemn tones to announce to the city the passing of the soul of Sir Thomas Browne.

A week later all that was mortal was laid to rest



CHURCH OF ST. PETER MANCROFT, NORWICH.

in the stately church of St. Peter Mancroft, and crowds filled the market square as the procession passed along.

The noble and the rich, the poor and the humble, had lost a friend, and they knew it.

As Arthur Dee turned sadly away from the house, on the evening of the funeral, he met the Earl of Yarmouth, who was anxious to learn how the widow of his friend supported her trial.

"Bravely, as becomes her," Arthur Dee said, grasping Lord Yarmouth's* outstretched hand; "bravely, my lord, and she says the time is short ere she rejoins him."

"That is true," said Lord Yarmouth. "He would not have any of us grieve heavily for him, and he expressed as much to me the day before he departed. But it is fitting that Norwich should hold him in dutiful remembrance. I pray that his name may be handed down to future generations as author, philosopher, and physician: aye, and as a true and loyal friend. I loved him well," Lord Yarmouth continued; "for many a year our friendship has been unclouded, and Master Richard Whitefoot knows it. I have just left him preparing the sermon wherein our dear

* Sir Robert Paston of Oxnead.

friend's character shall be drawn in true and vivid colours ; but as he spoke to me of his task the tears blotted the paper before him."

"It will in truth be no easy task, my lord," said Arthur Dee ; "and yet a more difficult one remains in the selection of his unpublished papers, and the giving them to the world, in a form worthy of him and them."

"Yes, indeed, you speak truly ; and some words of our dear friend's have been present with me, as I have walked under the stars this night, to the door of the silent house, where once the warmest welcome awaited me. He sayth somewhere in 'Christian Morals'—

"'Annihilate not the mercies of God by the oblivion of ingratitude, for oblivion is a kind of annihilation, and for things to be as though they had not been, is like unto *never being*.' This shall not, for the honour of Norwich, be true of the friends of Sir Thomas Browne. We must see to it that his memory be kept bright, who by his work added so greatly to the light of other lives. Surely the ingratitude of oblivion shall not be laid to our charge."

Lord Yarmouth turned away after pressing Arthur Dee's hand in his, saying, as he parted from him :

"Let me see you at Oxnead ere many days have

passed. Methinks I am on the eve of a discovery which would have gladdened the heart of our lost friend, and shall gladden yours."

Arthur Dee had so often heard the same hopes expressed, and had been again and again summoned to Oxnead to observe some strange new phase in alchemy, which must lead to great results, that he was not too sanguine this time.

But he thanked Lord Yarmouth for his invitation, and pursued his way alone to his own home.

"There can be no oblivion for me," he said to himself, "of the past. In that past, sweet Mary lives, and the father who loved her so well, and whom she resembled. Beyond the stars, beyond the world, with its petty aims and ends, surely those two have met again: but how and where?"

Then as he looked up into the infinite space, the countless stars of the chill autumn night seemed to bring to him, as it has brought to many another sad and questioning heart, the message of life and immortality brought to light, while the majestic words of St. Paul, which he had heard that morning, almost involuntarily left his lips: "As one star differeth from another star in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead;" and filled with the blessed hope of eternal life, Arthur Dee was

comforted. What we know not here, we shall know hereafter, and when the veil is lifted, what this mortal life has concealed, death, the portal of the immortal life, shall reveal ! And in this faith the Philosopher and Physician passes from our sight.

PART IV.

WHERE true fortitude dwells, loyalty, beauty, friendship, and fidelity may be found. A man may confide in persons constituted for noble ends, who dare do and suffer, and who have a hand to burn for their country and their friends.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE.



UNDER THE SOLEMN PINES.

THE short summer of those Far Western latitudes was in its full glory, and the fast growing settlement of Falcon's Nest lay half in cool shadow cast by a thick dark belt of solemn pines, and half in the radiant sunshine which seemed to have called, as by magic, in a few short days, all living things—flowers, birds, and bees—into life and activity.

In the verandah, before the minister's house, which was built of carefully fitted timbers, lay Amphyllis Windham.

The verandah was spacious, and supported on natural columns formed by the straight stems of the trees, which needed but little cutting to adapt them to their position. These natural pillars were wreathed about with climbing plants, and from a dove-cot to the right in the enclosed garden, now bright with flowers, there came the perpetual gentle "coo-coo" of Bridget Whitelock's pigeons.

From the verandah there was a view of the little

church, also built of timber, and which had been enlarged again and again, to meet the needs of the increasing population, whom John Falconer had attracted thither to cast in their lot with him.

There were now several good-sized houses with land attached, and many neat labourers' cottages, where the voices of the children rang out merrily, and gave brightness and joy to the parents, who had, at first perhaps, pined after the old home in the old country.

John Falconer was as a king in the little settlement, and though now bent with age, his sons were already taking his place, and would, so it seemed, follow in their father's steps.

Perhaps almost equal in importance in the eyes of the simple folk about him, was Andrew Whitelock, whose figure is moving across the road from the church towards his own home, when the postman, who came at long intervals from Maryburgh, the nearest large town, put a thick packet into his hand.

Amphyllis, from her post in the verandah, saw Andrew take it, and her large eyes shone with eagerness as she said:

"I have lived for *this*!"

Andrew, as he walked towards her, kept his eyes upon the packet, and saw at once that it was from

Sir Thomas Browne, in answer to his letter, brought by private hand, probably one of the Falcon Nest people, and addressed to Mistress Amphyllis Windham. How would she bear the news it contained? he wondered; would the satisfaction in getting that for which she had so eagerly longed, be too much for her?

She was, next to God, always first with him, and he almost dreaded lest the excitement which the letter would awake in her, might dash to the ground his hopes of keeping her with him a little longer.

For since the summer weather had set in, Amphyllis had wonderfully revived, and there were many who encouraged Andrew to hope that she might live to see other springs and bright summers.

Bridget was now an old woman of sixty, but like most people who have never had any youthful beauty, years had altered her but little, and she looked very much as she had done in the old cottage at Cringleford. She stepped out now to meet her brother, and asked:

"Was that the letter-carrier from Maryburgh, Andrew?"

"Yes, there is but one letter, and it is for Amphyllis."

"How thankful she will be!—take it to her quickly."

Andrew, however, did not quicken his pace, and poor Amphyllis was suffering all the time the misery of suspense.

As soon as he was within hearing, she exclaimed, rising and extending her hand :

“Is that letter for me, Andrew ?”

“Yes,” was the reply ; “but sit down again, or I must not let you have it.”

She obeyed him instinctively ; she always obeyed him now. Indeed his continued watchfulness over her and tender care had doubtless prolonged her life.

Andrew Whitelock's face was now, after the lapse of twenty years, a study for anyone who had eyes to see. Noble resolve, lofty courage, of which his self-forgetfulness, or rather self-sacrifice, was the outcome, had left their mark upon his fine countenance. His hair was sprinkled with gray ; and partly from want of opportunity of regular cutting, and partly because Amphyllis liked it, he had allowed it to grow, and it fell on the black gown or cassock he always wore, in heavy masses, though the crown of his head was bald. Andrew Whitelock was still a Puritan ; he still renounced all outward forms and ceremonies ; he still ignored all help of books for devotion, and longed to gather every

one into what he believed to be the safety of his own particular fold. But the hardness and unrelenting severity of judgment which characterised him in days past had vanished. The expression of his beautifully formed mouth, showed that the law of kindness now moulded his lips ; his eyes shone with a lambent light, which won the hearts of many even more than his words, and the whole bearing of the man testified to the truth of Sir Thomas Browne's words which stand at the head of this, the last brief part of my story.

It could scarcely be otherwise : a love so great that it could forget itself, and hunger only to bless the object of its devotion, must needs show some outward sign of its presence. I think we are sometimes at a loss to account for a subtle charm in a countenance, when, if we could look beyond the outward token, we should see that self-sacrifice, pure and unshadowed by any false or ignoble aims, was the secret of a beauty which we find ourselves powerless to describe by words.

And the reverse is also true. Many are the faces perfect in form and feature, which remain, as it were *blank* to us, and unexpressive. We are constrained to admit they are beautiful ; but it is the beauty of form without the soul : there is no sympathy within

to cast a light without ; self is the centre, and self the end and aim of all hopes and desires, and as time passes, and the beauty of form and colour fades with age, as fade they must, there is no fair principle at work within, which often, as the natural man decays, is seen to shine with ever-increasing radiance as the wrinkles multiply and the gray hairs crown the head with winter's snow.

These are the people over whom age exerts but little power ; and so gentle is its touch, that if we think of the days of the years of their life at all, it is only to tell ourselves how much more beautiful they grow with time, and how the loveliness of their eventide surpasses that of their morning.

Perhaps this could hardly be said of Amphyllis. Her features were sharpened and her figure wasted : even the beautiful golden hair had lost something of its lustre, and was fading into a sort of dusky gray in some places ; but, though inexpressibly sad, her face was inexpressibly sweet, and she had never been dearer to those around than she was now.

When Andrew put the letter into her hand, she said :
"That is addressed by Sir Thomas Browne. Perhaps there is an enclosure for you," she said, breaking the large seal, and unfastening the cord tied round it for safety.

"Yes," she continued, "a separate sheet in Dame Dorothy's hand. She will never forgive me, though I know the Doctor has done so long ago."

Andrew opened his letter, and glancing at its contents, sat down by Amphyllis.

"This is a message from the dead," he said, in his calm, low voice, touching the page Amphyllis was eagerly reading.

She looked up quickly.

"Dame Dorothy tells me that this letter to you was, so far as she knows, the last her husband ever penned, and that she unites in the love and forgiveness that it breathes. He died on his seventy-seventh birthday—the nineteenth day of October last year."

Amphyllis clasped her hands, and the letter she had held fell to the ground.

"Full of years and honours," she murmured; "full of years. Tom's father! Tom will be glad to know that he forgave me ere he went. *Does he know?*"

"We will not strive to look into the secrets of the Most High," Andrew said. "The departed rest in the Lord; let this suffice."

Then he picked up the letter, and replacing it gently on her knee, beckoned to Bridget, and they left her alone.

There was news in the letter which sent Amphyllis's thoughts back into the past. That short gay life at Court looked to her now, as if it must have been led by someone else, not herself. Her marriage, as she believed it, in the dark, dim chapel ; the jewels and fine dresses which Christopher Talbot had at first heaped on her ; his fervent devotion ; then the gradual awaking ; the shock much that he said and did gave to all her notions of truth and goodness ; and then the final discovery that her marriage had been but in name ! Now he was dead, and it was all over, and she felt a sting of remorse that she had never even tried to influence him for good.

Then came, it must be said, a certain sense of relief that she was now free even from the phantom of a tie, which had brought on her shame and sorrow of heart.

"I shall lie down by Tom's side with a peacefuller feeling methinks, and Andrew—Andrew——"

She was speaking aloud, and as she pronounced his name Andrew returned, for he had kept near at hand.

"Did you need aught, Amphyllis ?" he asked.

"Nay," she said ; "but prythee sit down awhile, and let us talk. This is a letter of consolation, Andrew,—a letter of love and forgiveness, and it

tells me that one whose name it hurts me to mention is dead, pierced by a stiletto in Spain."

"May the All-Merciful have had mercy on him," Andrew said.

"Amen!" Amphyllis said gently, adding, "And on *me*."

Then, after a pause, she said :

"Dear Andrew, you have been so good to me, so good and kind and patient ; you, too, have forgiven me." She paused, but he did not speak.

"For you know, Andrew, I must have often pained you and grieved you, and you have never failed me. You have sheltered me and protected me, and taught me to love the dear Lord, who has forgiven me ; and oh ! I do want you to know I love you."

Poor Andrew's self-control had nearly forsaken him. He knelt down by her side, and, bowing his head, murmured some words all but inarticulate.

"I think," Amphyllis went on, "I should like you to carry me to lie down, for I am so tired now, and perhaps the real Rest is near. Look up, Andrew, and do not be sad, for *I am safe*."

Then, as his dream of long ago came back to him he raised his head, and her sweet face bending over him had an unwonted brightness in it—

a light such as it had never known, when she was called the star of beauty in her Court days.

Involuntarily she said, as a forgiven child might have said, as he raised her in his arms to carry her to her room, "Kiss me, Andrew."

Then their lips met. It was the first and the last kiss Andrew had ever taken or received from Amphyllis Windham.

And this was their farewell. She never came into the flowery verandah again, but sank to rest, as a child sinks to sleep, before another week had passed.

Those who loved her, and they were many, came to look at her as she lay dead, her long white hands folded upon her breast, and on the fourth finger of her left hand, a sapphire shone brightly, the token that the love of her early youth had never changed.

It was a sweet Sabbath afternoon when, in the presence of the whole settlement, Amphyllis Windham was laid to rest by the side of Thomas Browne. The solemn pines echoed with the sound of Luther's hymn, which was sung as with one voice by the assembly. John Falconer's was amongst them, weak and feeble, and the strong bass of all his stalwart sons; while poor Joan's harsh quavering voice joined in the singing and the final Amen which the minister's prayer called forth.

Those who saw him standing there with uplifted hand, his eyes raised to the clear summer sky, on his noble face the light of faith triumphing over the shadow of grief, never forgot it. They said, "His face was as the face of an angel."

When the village was asleep that night, and no sound broke the stillness, but the mysterious sea-like murmur in the belt of encircling pines, Andrew Whitelock was standing by the last resting-place of his only love. He knelt down and poured out his soul in prayer, and then, pressing his lips upon the turf which had been cut and brought at once to cover it from the greensward of the forest, he said :

"Farewell, sweet Amphyllis ; radiant as thy morning was, the evening has been fairer still. To the arms of eternal love I commend thee. Though never mine, yet always mine, in the life eternal."

And now in the stillness, a step was heard, a slow, faltering step, and very soon John Falconer, leaning on his stick, stood by Andrew's side.

"I could not sleep," he said, "and something drew me hither. The past lives again for me, as I think of one whom I loved as a son. There was never a nobler nor truer heart than Tom Browne's."

"I verily believe it," said Andrew, offering his arm to the old man. "I verily believe it."

"And this I say," continued John Falconer, "that Amphyllis Windham, must ever remain a marvel amongst women, in that she possessed the faithful and undying love of *two* such men. Little did I dream, when I came upon her all unawares, in the park in England—charged with my friend's message—that I was speaking to the woman he had loved till death. You at least, Andrew Whitelock, have had the joy denied him of ministering to her, and making her last years on earth her best years."

"It is kindness in you thus to strive to comfort me, John Falconer, for verily," he said, with a sudden spasm of agony in his voice,—*"verily, I need it."*

A little later the two men parted, with a formal blessing pronounced by Andrew Whitelock, and endorsed by John Falconer's deep *"Amen."*

Where the forest-trees sang their funeral song, and the dark-skinned Indian flitted across the clearings, which the hand of the white man had made, those of whom I write have all slept in peace for many and many a year.

As the winter's snows come and go, and the spring bursts forth with her yearly miracle of blossoms, and the voice of the turtle is heard ; as the summer smiles

with its radiant flowers, and the autumn glows with its ripened grain and crimson leaves : so is the old, old story of human life and love for ever being told. For there is no new thing under the sun.

A roughly-hewn wooden tablet, cut from the heart of some stalwart oak, for many years marked the place where Amphyllis Windham lies by the side of the man who had loved her, as he had vowed he would, till death.

Long, long after, a traveller who had come to Falcon's Nest, inquired if a son of the great Norwich physician, Sir Thomas Browne, were buried there.

"Yes," said a merry boy—a great, great-grandson of John Falconer—"here is the grave; Granny showed it to me;" and, sweeping away the long grass with his fingers, he disclosed the letters cut by Andrew's hand, and now all but illegible. With some difficulty the stranger read :

Here lieth the mortal part of

AMPHYLLIS WINDHAM

and

THOMAS BROWNE,

Of H.M.S. "Foresight,"

Parted in life, death united them :

They rest in the Lord.

"And did not one Andrew Whitelock, minister here?"

The boy shook his head.

"I never heard of *his* grave," he said. "There might have been a headstone, but it is all crumbled to dust, if ever it stood here."

So nothing marks the spot where Andrew Whitelock rested. Probably he left the settlement when Amphyllis died. There is no record on earth to tell ; but be very sure that one who laboured for the good of others as Andrew did, and who lived for God, has his record on high !



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